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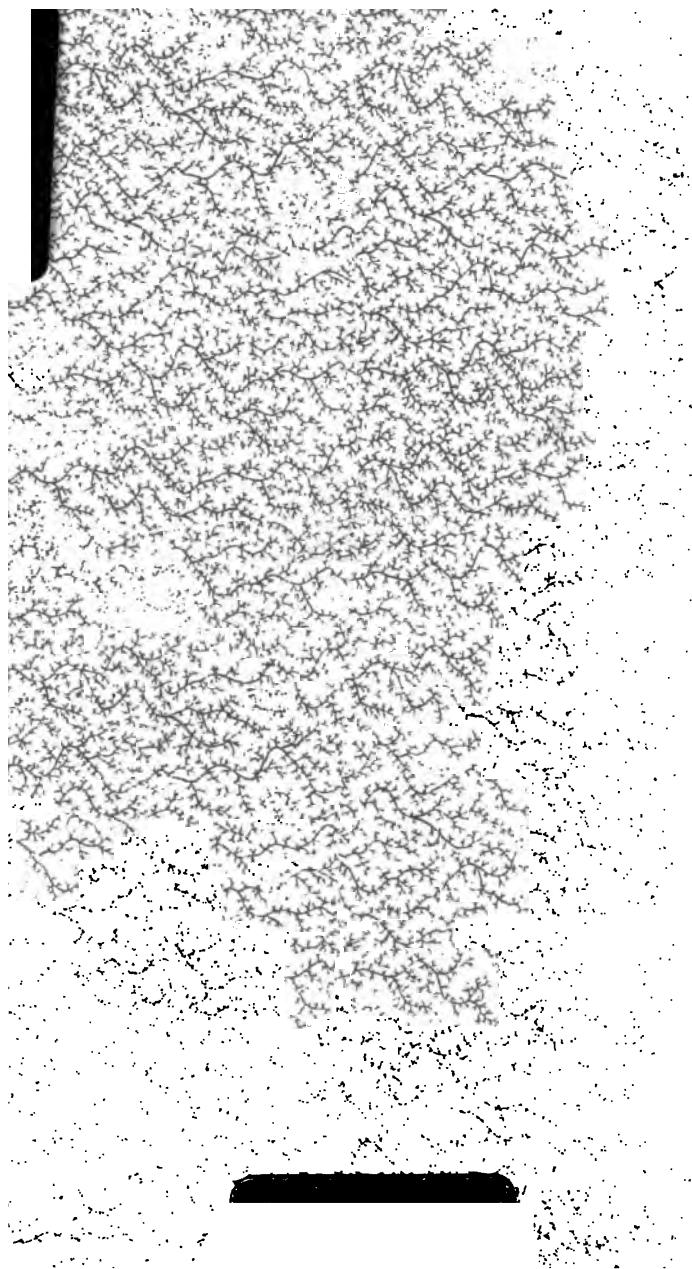
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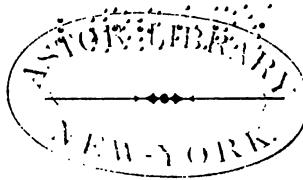
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H I S T O R Y
OF THE
G R E A T R E F O R M A T I O N
IN
E N G L A N D, I R E L A N D, S C O T L A N D, G E R M A N Y,
F R A N C E, A N D I T A L Y.

BY REV. THOMAS CARTER.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE history of that greatest moral movement of modern times, usually called the Reformation, abounds in striking events and characters, and is rich with inferences of wisdom and truth. Rightly told, it furnishes also impressive lessons of piety and doctrine. Too often it scarce can be repeated, and it should never fade from the public mind. The want has hence been felt by our publishers of a work written in the spirit of the Reformers, embracing the entire scope of the subject, which, less voluminous than that of D'Aubigné, should present the story with popular effect. The task was undertaken by Mr. Carter, and we

trust has been successfully performed. Possessing a true sympathy with his subject, he has presented its varied scenes and events with a clear, fresh, earnest style. We commend it to all readers who desire a brief but readable and impressive history of the great movement.

THEY WISH
21.20.4
YESTERDAY

A U T H O R ' S P R E F A C E .

Such a work as is here offered to the public appeared to me desirable for the following reasons:

1. No history of the Great Reformation in either England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, France, or Italy has ever been published in this country, to my knowledge, which was written here. The Reformation is one of the most important events in the world's history, and this nation is not the least interested in such history.
2. The excellent history of Merle D'Aubigné, in five volumes, written in Europe, and published here, only brings the German Reformation down to the Confession of Augsburg in the year 1530, sixteen years before the death of Luther; the English Reformation down to the death of Cardinal Wolsey, also in the year 1530; only commences the French Reformation, bringing it to the year 1525, and does not touch Italy at all. Other volumes are to come which *will no doubt equal in ability those already published.*

But a work which should seize the main facts, and complete the history of each country by itself, possessing the reader's mind with the grand events of that era, by touching lightly on, or omitting minute particulars, I supposed, must be one, if properly executed, of permanent value to all classes of readers.

3. The Protestant martyrs were heroes of their age. If there ever have been men worthy of being remembered by posterity, they are the men. They were pioneers in civil and religious liberty. They opened the way, by their sufferings and death, to freedom in worshiping God. The very fact that they fell in such countless numbers, renders an oblivion of them more easy. It has been said that the first pages of Protestantism are only read by the light of the flames which consumed its martyrs. If I have helped to rescue some of them from forgetfulness, and to place them before my readers, as examples of piety, zeal, and self-denial, I have attained one of my objects.

4. In these easy times, and in this happy country, where no one suffers death and imprisonment for Christ's sake, it must be beneficial to the Christian to look back and consider how much others have endured that they might be faithful to God. I have, therefore, often introduced the persecuted saint as he dies for Christ, so that Christians may be led to inquire

if they are ready to endure such hardness, as good soldiers; and if ready thus to suffer, then, as to other crosses, the yoke will be easy and the burden light.

5. The Bible, distributed and read among the people, was one grand cause of the Reformation. Where this was not done there was no lasting fruit. I have hoped that, in beholding this fact through the following pages, we might be moved to greater zeal in spreading the word of God.

As to the plan of the work, my readers will perceive that it is varied as I have passed from one country to the other. Otherwise a certain sameness must ensue. In the English Reformation the passing events are related principally by bringing forward the prominent Reformers. In Germany, aside from Luther, who must appear in front in any history of the German Reformation, occurrences affecting more the nation at large are placed before the reader. In France, while individuals are kept in view, other events are related having an intimate connection with the progress of the truth in that country, but yet not identified with the names of the Reformers. In Italy I have endeavored, as in the English Reformation, to bring up before the mind some of the devoted and suffering men who have struggled to be true to God through every trial of their faith, and whose names seem almost forgotten among us.

As to the authorities which substantiate the facts that I relate, many of them I have given in the notes; but where the circumstances have been such as were not likely to be doubted, I have often not incumbered my pages with them. There is one work to which, in writing on France, I am under special obligations, and from which I have translated a number of the incidents related in my history of the French Reformation. It is a valuable and able history of the Reformation in France, by F. Puaux, published in the year 1859 at Paris.

GREAT BARRINGTON, MASS.,

November, 1859.

CLARENCE
W. DAVIS:

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HISTORY
OR
THE GREAT REFORMATION.

GENERAL VIEW.

CHAPTER I.

RESULTS OF THE REFORMATION.

As we turn our attention to those great events which transpired in the religious world three centuries and more ago, it seems proper that we should first glance at some of the results which have proceeded from them.

And if it should appear that we are now enjoying many blessings which have come to us through the means of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, it will naturally lead us to take a greater interest in what thus personally concerns us. It will tend, also, to increase our gratitude to God, as we contemplate not only the toils and sufferings of the Reformers, but the advantages which, by those toils and sufferings, have accrued to ourselves.

The beneficial results of the great Reformation to the ages succeeding it, down to our own day, are not altogether of a religious character. They relate to our welfare both in this world and the next. We will name them in order.

1. A new impulse has been given to knowledge. A spirit of inquiry was roused, which led men to read and think. The Roman Church said: "Submit yourselves to authority without examination;" the Protestant Church says: "Examine, and submit yourselves only to conviction."

Few works were written in those days which preceded the Reformation; and these, shut up in the monasteries, were hardly ever in the tongue of the people. The Latin language was used by the few who were authors, and by learned men. Even in their vernacular, it was the boast of the peasant, the nobleman, the prince, that they could neither read or write. Study was rendered as difficult as possible to the laity, and to both clergy and laity the reading of all books tending to unshackle the mind was prohibited. Fra Paolo, mentioning an index of forbidden books which was published at Rome in 1559, says, among other things: "That in it, under pretext of religion, the pope had condemned to excommunication the authors of writings, solely because the authority of princes and magistrates was supported in them against the usurpations of ecclesiastics. Besides this, the Roman inquisitors prohibited, *en masse*, all the books printed by sixty-two printers, without regard to their contents; adding a général prohibition against reading any book coming from the press of a printer who should once in his life have printed any writing coming from the pen of a heretic. So that," continues the historian, "nothing was left to read."*

The Reformation broke these chains imposed upon the mind, and overthrew the barriers which prevented a free communication of thought.

The way was thus opened to the study of ancient

* *Histoire du Concile de Trente*, lib. vi.

writers and of Scripture; to the establishment of schools; to the encouragement of authors; and the nations were prepared for a general diffusion of knowledge.

2. A new impulse was also given to literature. Great numbers of books were written for and against the principles of reform. These writings greatly improved the languages in which they were written. Take only one example or two. Luther's translation of the German Bible has given a permanence, precision, and force to the German tongue which it never possessed before. The present English translation of the Bible has not only been a model of the language for its simplicity and beauty, but for over two hundred years it has preserved our mother tongue in comparative purity.

And where are now found the great writers of our day? Nearly all of them in Protestant countries. Where are found quarterly, monthly, weekly, and daily journals scattered among the people? In Protestant countries. In whose hands are found the large publishing houses? Protestants. Compare even countries where some districts are Protestant and some Catholic, and in these are to be found the same differences. Take Switzerland for instance. I quote the words of an eloquent and learned French author who wrote, fifty years ago:

“Switzerland will afford the same contrasts. How many celebrated men of letters have sprung from Geneva, whom literature and the sciences called with pride among us! Berne, Lausanne, Basle, Zurich, Schaffhausen have their literary annals filled with celebrated names. The antiquarian Morel; Haller, the creator of physiology, and also a great poet; Crouzas; the Buxtorfs; the Werensels; Ber-

nouilli; Euler; Iselen, the first who conceived the idea of writing a philosophical history of the human race; the Wetsteins; Gessner, the naturalist and restorer of the natural sciences; Gessner, the bucolic poet; some other German poets, such as Bodmer, etc., who have contributed so much to the restoration of elegant literature in Germany, who have restored it to national independence and originality; in short, a multiplicity of authors whom it would be superfluous to name. Catholic Switzerland, on the contrary, has not a single man of eminence of any description to mention.”*

Then as men read the writings of the Reformers and their adversaries, a thirst for a knowledge of the ancient languages was created, both among the Roman Catholics and Protestants. In the language of one: “In proportion as the classic works of antiquity, those eternal models of the beautiful, genuine and sublime as nature, were more dispersed and read, men’s minds were gradually elevated to their pitch, and shook off the barbarism of the Gothic ages.”†

Still more they felt then the need of a living and cultivated tongue in which they could convey their conceptions to the people. All the modern languages, with the exception perhaps of the Italian, were in the rude state which arises from a want of use, and it was necessary that some great event,

* “Essay on the Spirit and Influence of the Reformation, by C. Vil-lers;” the work which obtained the prize on this question (proposed by the National Institute of France, in the public sitting of the 15th Germinal in the year x.) “What has been the influence of the Reformation by Luther on the political situation of the different States of Europe, and on the progress of knowledge?”

† Stock’s work “De bonarum Litterarum Palingenesia, sub et post Reformationem.”

which should rouse all thoughts and agitate all minds, should appear. Then only would men write, and then only would they read. *This subject was found in the Reformation.* Now only a few at any time, even after their study became more general, could read or write the ancient languages. Hence it would not do to write in them for the people, much less in that Latin jargon which the monks had been using, and which was encumbered by all the blemishes of centuries of corruption. Therefore, their taste corrected by the study of the classics, authors wrote to the people in the tongues which they spoke, and gradually raised them toward the standards which they themselves had studied. Thus the controversies of the Reformation, which had become the business of all Europe, furnished the first active principle by which modern languages were really fertilized, and were the furnaces in which they were elaborated and purified.*

Says the Marquis D'Argens: "In these times of ignorance Luther appeared, like one of those cheering lights which, after a long tempest, announce to mariners an approaching calm. This great man did as much good to science as he did injury to the court of Rome." "He not only ridiculed the opinions of the theologians, but their language and their manner of writing. He was seconded in his undertakings by Calvin, and it is to these disputes on religion that we are indebted for the restoration of the fine and good style. The theologians of the different parties eagerly strove with each other to write correctly, and to prejudice their readers by the purity of their style."†

* French prize essay above referred to.

† *Histoire de l'Esprit Humain*, tom. 1, p. 258.

The eagerness with which all classes received their productions was astonishing. Especially was it so in reference to Luther. "No writer for many ages had seen his writings bought up with such avidity, and so universally read from the throne to the cottage. They were all reprinted several times, pirated, hawked over all the empire. The popularity, the natural ease, the energy of expression which prevailed in them, together with a doctrine which cheered and elevated the soul, gained him the most upright and judicious of all classes."*

The same thing may be said in a measure of the Reformers in other countries; and thus their writings circulated, purifying, improving, and correcting the modern languages of Europe.

Even the controversies of the Jesuits and Jansenists gave rise to works which imparted precision, strength, and delicacy to the French language.

3. The same impulse was given to the arts and sciences. When every new idea was regarded with suspicion, as it was by the court of Rome, it was hard for the human mind to make progress in the arts. When Copernicus had made those discoveries in astronomy which have rendered his name immortal, he dared not publish them for years; and it was only as he was about to close his eyes in death that he beheld the first printed copy of his book. When Galileo afterward asserted their truth, he was accused by the Inquisition, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment for heresy. But we need not stop to give examples. We have only to compare Roman Catholic with Protestant countries in our own day. Where do we find agriculture carried on with spirit by the aid of modern improvements? In countries where

* M. Georges Muller of Schaffhausen, "Lettres sur les Sciences."

the mind is free and the Bible is read. The traveler, as he passes through Italy, Spain, Portugal, etc., is struck with wonder at the absence of so many of those agricultural instruments which modern science has given us. Let him even pass through a Romish province of Ireland or Switzerland, and then a Protestant one; he will be amazed at the difference. In one, a miserable cottage, covered with thatch, the fields badly kept, wretched rude peasants, and a great abundance of beggars. In the other, neat, pleasant houses, fields well inclosed, a culture well understood; and as he enters the houses, a still greater contrast in the neatness and good arrangement of the interior.

Where again do all those inventions originate which are applied to our manufactories, our vessels, our buildings? We are obliged to give the same answer. Where do numerous railways and telegraphs cross each other, and follow each other's courses? Not in the dominions of the pope, but where the spirit of Protestantism has pervaded the country.

4. Commerce also has in a great measure followed the march of the Reformation. When Spain rejected the doctrines of the Bible, and shut up her noblest sons and daughters in dungeons, or shed their blood at her *autos*, her fleets, which had whitened every shore, soon dwindled away, and her commercial influence passed into other hands. And now, if we should inquire what nations possess the commerce of the world, the answer must be, those nations where the mind is unshackled by Romanism, and where the Bible is read by the people.

5. The political benefits to the nations which have come under the influence of the Reformation, have been very great.

In Germany, before that great event, there was an

irregular aggregate of states, which necessity or convenience had united into an ill-formed confederation, the constitution of which was a true chaos. The Reformation offered them a rallying point. They embraced it as much from political motives as from religious persuasion. By the league of Smalcald and their subsequent struggles, they tried their strength and acquired confidence in themselves, and from disorder and disorganization arose order, unity, and strength.

Holland before the Reformation had no independent existence as a nation. It formed part of the empire as it existed under Charles V. After his death it became part of the possessions of Philip II., his son, of Spain. Driven to madness by his furious persecutions, its inhabitants fought bravely for their religious and political rights, until they became one among the families of nations. A free republic was the result of a determination to enjoy free thought and a free Bible. Soon the Dutch fleets took the place of those of Spain, and the political and commercial importance of the United Provinces became rapidly the reward of their efforts.

England has extended her influence and widened her power just so far as she has adopted the principles of the Bible. Compare her position with that of Spain, Portugal, Italy, or any of those South American nations upon which the blight of Romanism hangs like a funeral pall, paralyzing their energies, and what answer must we receive?

France has never been the abject slave of the Roman pontiff. She had always contended for what she considered her peculiar rights, which she called the liberties of the Gallican Church. Consequently the *minds of her people have never become so blinded,*

and her energies never so palsied as in those countries where the pope held absolute sway.

Our own country is a child of the Reformation. Its founders fled from oppression and persecution to enjoy the liberty of thought for which the Reformers contended. More than half a century ago, the eloquent author whom I have quoted, in speaking of this great republic, wrote as follows:

“But who can calculate [he is speaking of our influence as a nation] that which it may one day acquire on the colonial and commercial system so important to Europe? Who can foretell all that may result in the two worlds from the seductive example of the independence achieved by the Americans? What new position would the world assume if this example were followed? And without doubt it will be in the end. Thus two Saxon monks will have changed the face of the globe. The Dominican Tetzel came impudently to preach indulgences at the gates of Wittemberg; the open and vehement Luther was indignant at it; he raised his voice against the indulgences, and all Europe was affected, put into a ferment, and inflamed. A new order of things was the result; powerful republics were formed. Their principles, still more powerful than their arms, were introduced into all nations. Hence arose great revolutions; and those which may yet arise are doubtless incalculable.”*

6. The despotism of the pope over the minds of men has been broken. Before the time of Luther the threatened anathema of the holy father made kings tremble on their thrones. When the threat was executed, and the thunders of the Vatican fell with all their weight upon even the sovereign of

* French essay before referred to.

some powerful nation it was sufficient to drive him from his dominions an humble suppliant to Rome; or it was sufficient to arm his subjects against him, to close the churches, and to cause all religious rites throughout his dominions to cease. But when light began to pierce the gloom, all this was changed. Paul III. cited Henry VIII. to appear before him, and when he refused, the pope, attempting to wield the power of his predecessors, declared him deposed from his throne.* Pius V. pronounced the same sentence on Elizabeth of England. Both were disregarded with impunity. Fifty years ago it was said that "a simple courier, secretly expedited from Paris, Vienna, or Lisbon to this ancient capital of the world, procured sometimes a bull for the extinction of a religious order, sometimes a reform, sometimes a regulation, so many proofs of submission given by the weak successor of so many arrogant pontiffs, who only purchases his precarious existence at the price of every complaisance which is required of him."

Over individuals his tyranny once was just as complete. Even Luther did not pretend to oppose the pope at first. However religious a man might be, yet to get out of the Church, or to be anything but a Roman Catholic, was a calamity not to be thought of. He who was not a Roman Catholic was not a man; he was less than a man, and it was accounted a good action to take his life. This was the doctrine of the Church, and where infallibility is claimed it must be its doctrine still.† How many

* Nos. . . Henricum privationis regni incurrisse pœnam declaramus. Bullar. Magn.

† Ostendimus jam satis aperte justum esse ut hæreticos occidatur; quo autem genere mortis sit occidendus parum ad rem facit. Nam quocunque modo occidatur, semper consulitur ecclesiæ. *Alphonsus a Castro. De Justa Hæreticorum Pœna*, lib. ii, cap. 12.

millions are now in Protestant countries, and even scattered among the inhabitants of Roman Catholic nations, who have been emancipated from this tyranny, and have no tremblings of heart because they do not bear the name of Roman Catholic.

7. That civil and religious liberty has been established in countries which have adopted the principles of the Reformation, and is one of the benefits accruing from it, is so manifest that little more is necessary to be said than simply to state it. It is true that the Reformers sometimes persecuted each other, and refused each other the rights for which they had contended; but this was the result of their early training; it was Romanism yet *in the bone*, a chronic disease hard to eradicate and slow of cure. But wherever their principles were carried out to their legitimate results *there* we behold free men, and liberty to worship God. We have only to compare Roman Catholic and Protestant countries to behold in one, persecutions, banishments, and imprisonments for presuming to read the Bible differently from a profligate priest, or for reading it at all; and in the other, quiet and peace in serving God according to the conscience. No blood flows now where the Bible has its home; no prisons are filled to overflowing; no tortures are endured; no inquisition holds its dark sessions; no flames are kindled to compel men to think alike.*

8. But above all other benefits derived from the Reformation is that which arises from its influence upon religion, and hence upon morality. Rome

* Indeed, it may be truly said that the league of Smalcald, so intimately connected with the Reformation, and the offspring of its early struggles, was the first effective union of free provinces and states against their oppressors in modern Europe.

forbade the reading of the Holy Scriptures. To do so without permission of a priest was a crime. Hence the prevalent ignorance and immorality. True morality almost entirely disappeared, and religion was reduced to a man's duties to the Church. But as men began to study the Bible they began to live according to it, and the more they read it the more they were convinced of their want of conformity to the will of God, while practicing simply the rites of the Church.

They saw the nature of true religion and began earnestly to seek for it. And as sincere men found peace with God, and the tongue was touched with hallowed fire, the good news spread from lip to lip, and from heart to heart. Then their lives became changed, and conversion to God brought forth its promised effect. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." It now came to pass that whenever the Reformers' doctrines became the doctrines of a nation at large, that nation showed a decrease of immorality and crime. And thus it has been ever since.

This will plainly appear by a reference to the statistics of different countries. About sixty years ago the following comparison was made :

"Cit. Rebmann, president of the special tribunal of Mayence, in his 'Coup-d'œil sur l'Etat des Quatres Departemens du Rhin,' says that the number of malefactors in the Catholic and Protestant cantons is in the proportion of four, if not six to one. At Augs-burgh, the territory of which offers a mixture of the two religions, of nine hundred and forty-six malefactors convicted in the course of ten years, there were only one hundred and eighty-four Protestants, that is to say, less than one in five. The celebrated philanthropist Howard observed that the prisons of Italy

were incessantly crowded: at Venice he has seen three or four hundred prisoners in the principal prison; at Naples nine hundred and eighty in the succursal prison alone, called Vicaria; while he affirms that the prisons of Berne are almost always empty; that in those of Lausanne he did not find any prisoner; and only three individuals in a state of arrest at Schaffhausen."

Recently a table has been compiled from public reports of the crime of murder, showing the number of criminals annually to every million of the population. Eleven Roman Catholic states are compared with Protestant England. It is as follows:

Roman Catholic Ireland.....	19	murders to a million of people.
" " Belgium....	18.	" " "
" " France.....	31	" " "
" " Austria....	38	" " "
" " Bavaria.....	68	" " "
" " Sardinia....	20	" " "
" " Lombardy..	45	" " "
" " Tuscany ...	56	" " "
" " Papal States	113	" " "
" " Sicily.....	90	" " "
" " Naples.....	174	" " "
Protestant England*.....	4	" " "

Thus in and around the city of the pope, in those very places where cardinals, monks, and priests are in thickest swarms, where we should expect to find purity and virtue, if those twin sisters bear any relationship to Rome, there are one hundred and thirteen and one hundred and seventy-four murders in every million to four in England.

And when such are the startling figures as to one grade of crime, with good reason may we expect

* Seymour's "Evenings with Romanists," cited by Rev. Charles Collins, D.D., in an article in the Methodist Quarterly Review for January 1857, page 45.

similar results in a comparison of all other offenses.* What incalculable benefits then has the Reformation brought to religion and morality !

CHAPTER II.

RELIGIOUS STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD PREVIOUS TO THE REFORMATION.

No candid person who has studied with any attention the state of the world from the year 1200 to 1500, will deny that a religious reformation of some kind was necessary at that time. The intelligent Roman Catholics then living admitted it themselves.

The necessity of this reformation was most apparent among the clergy, because they were most conspicuous. Priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and pope were, with an exception here and there, filled with all unrighteousness. Innumerable examples might be cited, but two or three will be sufficient as illustrations.

A bishop newly elected inquired after the library of his predecessor. He was led to an arsenal filled with military weapons. "Here are the books," he was told, "of which your predecessors made use, and which you must employ to defend your church against your neighbors."

"The Archbishop of Treves was constantly at war,

* In the United States of America it is just the same. When an inquiry was made not long ago at the House of Correction in Boston to test this point, it was ascertained that out of forty boys there were two Protestant and thirty-eight Roman Catholic. And so it is all through our prisons and our almshouses.

and delighted in nothing so much as in extending his territory by the chances of battle. The Bishop of Eichstadt would say that he was not afraid of five Bavarians, provided they would give him fair play.* Cæsar Borgia, Bishop of Pampeluna and Archbishop of Valencia, was said to have been the strongest and most handsome man of his age. He was not only a bishop, an archbishop, and a warrior, but the personification of all that was murderous and cruel. He procured the assassination of his eldest brother, and caused his brother-in-law to be strangled before his eyes. His father, Rodrigo Borgia, was pope. One day the latter had prepared poison for a cardinal he wished to get out of his way, but the cardinal, having been warned of his intention, caused the poison to be placed before the pope, who ate of it and died.†

Licentiousness also prevailed every where among the ministers of religion. Priests and bishops being forbidden to marry, almost everywhere kept their mistresses, and the convents were dens of corruption. "All of them in the capital," says one, "were houses of ill fame."‡

Their ignorance was as universal as their crimes. Frequently they had never read either the Old or New Testament. One both learned and celebrated called for a copy of the New Testament, but quickly flung it from him with an oath because he had opened on these words: "Swear not at all." "Either this is not the Gospel," said he, "or we are not Christians." If such were the morals of the clergy, what must the people have been?

This reformation was necessary also in the doc-

* Schmidt, *Gesch. der Deutschen*, vol. v.

† *Sanato Gordon Tomasi Infessura* etc.: *Merle D'Aubigné*, vol. i, p. 63-65.

‡ *Infessura*.

trines of the Church. We will notice one particular only. Christ taught that we might come unto him at once, without other mediators, and without any previous ceremonies and works. He says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Again: "There is one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ." Such passages as these show that a direct communication is opened between men and Christ. If other mediators were not necessary, neither were ceremonies and works, before coming to Christ. The prodigal son turns to his father, in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, without them. Jesus says himself: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;" and "the Spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and let him that is athirst, come; and *whosoever will*, let him take the water of life freely."

That this was far from being the way of salvation previous to the Reformation will appear by an extract from *Myconius*, which is as follows:

"The sufferings and merits of Christ were looked upon as an idle tale, or as the fictions of Homer. There was no thought of the faith by which we become partakers of the Saviour's righteousness and of the heritage of eternal life. Christ was looked upon as a severe judge, prepared to condemn all who should not have recourse to the intercession of the saints or to the papal indulgences. Other intercessors appeared in his place: first, the Virgin Mary, like the Diana of paganism; and then the saints, whose numbers were continually augmented by the popes."

How different all this was from that simplicity of *faith which marked the days of early Christianity*,

when thousands came at once to Christ; when a Philippian jailor in one night from a heathen became a baptized believer; when an officer of great authority under the Ethiopian queen, reading in his chariot, invited Philip, the deacon, to sit with him, and there, as they rode, listened while Philip preached unto him Jesus, and there believed in Christ, and while yet on his journey, the same day, was baptized.

Not only was a reformation necessary in morals and doctrine, but gross superstitions had invaded the Christian world.

Relics were worshiped and worn on the person as means of obtaining salvation. Carcasses, bones, arms, and feet were exhibited everywhere in the churches. In the Church of All Saints, at Wittemburg, was shown what the priests asserted was a fragment of Noah's Ark. In the same church were thousands of other relics, one of which they declared was a piece of wood from the cradle of our Saviour. Thus the temples of Christendom were filled with pretended remains of sacred things, by seeing or touching which the soul was supposed to be assisted in its efforts toward attaining the favor of God.

The heathen practice of self-inflicted tortures as atonements for sin was also greatly in repute. Men attained the reputation of being saints by punishing themselves, and not by real piety. One of the most popular modes of doing this was by whipping or flagellation. Processions headed by priests everywhere appeared, each man whipping himself in the most severe manner. Thus they marched through the streets, imploring with great outcry and clamor the mercy of God. The women inflicted the same discipline upon themselves at home. In time, how-

ever, men, women, and children joined the ranks, and in the most inclement weather, in the darkest nights, the streets were crowded with wretches torturing themselves and calling for forgiveness.

These are examples of the gross darkness and degradation to which nations called Christian had fallen. It is true, there were illustrious exceptions to this wide-spread spiritual desolation. There were those scattered here and there who read the Bible, and loved it, and followed it. But there was a great contrast between the Church at this era and the Church a hundred years after our Saviour, when Ignatius, after being forty years Bishop of Antioch was thrown to the wild beasts at Rome; who on receiving his sentence exclaimed: "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast condescended to honor me with thy love, and hast thought me worthy with thy apostle Paul to be bound in iron chains!"

CHAPTER III.

SOME CAUSES OF THE CORRUPTION OF CHRISTIANITY PREVIOUS TO THE REFORMATION:

WE will show some causes of the corruption of Christianity:

First. The natural depravity of the human heart, which tends of itself to degeneracy in any Church or community. The fathers at first were pious men. But as generation succeeded generation, the children grew up inheriting unchanged that iniquity in which our race is born. In this state they may *long have been* kept out of the Church, and its puri-

ty preserved; but the same calamity invaded the ministry, and soon unregenerate pastors admitted unregenerate members to their communion. Then the Church became corrupt in morals, which soon gave rise to corruption in doctrine, as it is very questionable if false doctrines ever invade a Church until it degenerates in morality.

We see this principle at work all through the history of God's Church. It was said of the Jewish people on their first settlement in the land of Canaan: "And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua." After this they degenerated, as the early Christian Church did. At different times reformations took place. One was under David, another under Josiah, another under Hezekiah; another, and which seemed to take a kind of separate organization, was the case of the sons of Rechab.

These reformations may sometimes have been but partial, yet they show the state of the Church, and how easily it glided away from spiritual life. And when the great Head, both of the Church militant and triumphant, came in person to his vineyard, he found the general wickedness so great that the very ministers who stood at the altar were the first to accuse and murder him. Who will deny that if the Church of the Old Testament, which was truly God's Church, could thus degenerate, the same was possible with the Church of the new dispensation?

Second. In the early ages the Christian Church was constantly making aggressions upon the heathen world, and receiving into its fold men who had been trained in all the darkness and horrors of heathenism. These, if converted, could not be supposed at first to have been fully sanctified. Some-

times, indeed, it must have happened that they were not converted at all. They would naturally, therefore, bring with them many of their early ideas and prejudices, and by degrees these became incorporated with Christianity. This is confirmed by the fact that we observe a striking similarity between the corruptions of Christianity and the worship of paganism. Images everywhere filled the temples of the latter, and thus it became with the former. A multitude of inferior divinities worshiped in the heathen world were changed, as pagan ideas came into the Christian Church, to saints. The minister of the New Testament was changed to the heathen priest, and a superstitious people conferred upon him the powers which had been associated in their minds with the idolatry of their fathers. The sacred days of heathenism were changed to the saints' days of Christendom, and observed with the festivities to which they had been accustomed. The simple public worship of the New Testament and of primitive Christianity was changed to the pompous ceremonies of idolatry. Thus Christianity, by its very aggressions, became sapped of its life and power. Its salt became too diffused to conquer the great national sins of paganism, and they became incorporated with it; and the mass of its members, like the ancient Samaritans, "feared the Lord, but served their own gods" under Christian names.

But was Christianity a grand failure, as some might be ready to assert on looking at the state of the Church previous to the Reformation?

By no means. It is true the Church was too much like heathenism, but it was *not* heathenism. Even in the darkest ages there were within it more morality and more true religion than ever existed in paganism.

And besides, all throughout Christendom there were truly pious men scattered here and there; men who read and loved the Bible; men who had learned *there* the difference between the superstitions around them and the true knowledge of God; men who walked with God, while ignorance and darkness were all around them. It is true they were few, and were often, like the Tishbite, obliged to fly for their lives to the wilderness and mountain; but while they were few compared to the mass, they were scattered all over. They were in the hills and valleys of Switzerland. They were hidden in the rocks of the Pyrenees. They were in the secluded spots of the country, and yet were to be found amid the busy hum of the city. They were even sometimes found within the too often licentious precincts of the convent and monastery. If God had once in the dominions of Ahab and Jezebel seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal, he had thousands called by the name of Roman Catholic who were truly his children.

Christianity then was not a failure, because it had leavened the mass, and because it had raised up in different countries, and in all the different ages of this night of ignorance, many who became heirs of heaven, and who are now enjoying an eternal weight of glory with Christ. But how many struggles it must have cost, when superstition bound the nations hand and foot, to cast off the shackles, and to come forth into the light of the Gospel. Blessed be God! the nineteenth century sheds a clearer light around us, and men do not now walk amid the mazes of superstition and error as they seek the pathway to heaven.

A *third* cause of the deplorable state of the Chris-
taul Reformation.

tian world previous to the Reformation was a mistaken view as to the unity of Christians.

Our Saviour had laid much stress on this point. In that memorable prayer which he made previous to the crucifixion, and contained in the seventeenth chapter of John, he had twice repeated "that they all may be one," and only prays for the conversion of the unregenerate world as the result of their oneness. Was it because he cared so much less for sinners than for his own children? No; this was not like the Saviour's heart of pity, who came to die for a lost world. It was because he knew the oneness of Christians was the best means of drawing sinners to himself.

The early Church, then, and the Church of the middle ages, did well in attaching so much importance to the oneness of Christians. All honor be to Rome for this! If she had understood the nature of this unity, it would have done much toward bringing her back to the purity of early Christianity.

The mistake she made was twofold: 1. An external union was put in place of a real internal unity. To be called by the same name was more than to possess the same religion. Hence, if two men were called Roman Catholic, and were both spiritual Christians, they were regarded as one, not on account of their spiritual unity, but on account of the name they bore. Therefore it soon came to pass that those who bore the name were regarded as one, whether they possessed real religious union or not. And whoever did not bear the orthodox name was nothing but a heretic. 2. A union of doctrine was also substituted for an internal religious unity. Not to believe exactly as the Church did was regarded as *heresy*, while the conduct and real Christian love of

the person was slightly thought of. So that when superstitions were gradually engrafted upon true Christianity, and had become, like the traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees, carefully and ceremoniously observed, while the commandments of God were lost sight of and forgotten, whoever would attempt a reformation must attack the orthodox superstitions, and call the people back to the commandments of God. Whenever any such attempt was made it was supposed to be an attempt to destroy the unity of the Church, and it was argued that individuals must rather suffer than the whole Church, and under the name of heretics such persons were led to the stake or the block; and thus attempts to rouse the Church or bring it to God were crushed by death and imprisonment. Whereas, if it had not been for this mistaken view of the necessity of doctrinal union, men's minds would have been free to seek for the truth, and to return to the Christianity of the Bible.

A fourth cause, and the last one which we shall mention, of the degeneracy of the Church, was the neglect of the Bible. Few of the people could read, and they cared not much to hear it read because they knew so little about it, and had not any true idea of its importance. They knew not, generally, that to understand the Scriptures was necessary to make them wise unto salvation. They knew not that the word of God was absolutely necessary to enlighten their minds and to guide them toward heaven. The principle which in our day has become so well settled in the religious mind, that the daily and constant searching of the Scriptures was necessary so as to continue faithful to God, was then almost unknown.

But if the people had been able to read there were few Bibles. Printing was not invented until the

fifteenth century, and all the Bibles which existed previously were written out with the pen. It was a long and toilsome task to write out the whole Bible, and a Bible was therefore an expensive article. They were not met with as they are now in almost every house. One might be found perhaps chained in a town or in a convent, and there at certain times persons might go and read it. But if a man wished to possess one he would have to pay the price of a small farm to obtain it.

But after all it was the fault of the clergy that the Bible was neglected. Had they faithfully preached its truths from the pulpit it would have incited the minds of men to further examination. They would have desired to know more of the text-book of their ministers. What they heard in the sermons they would have examined at home, or where they could hear or have access to the sacred book.

But the ministers of that day cared more for hunting hares than they did for hunting texts. They were more in their element handling the sword than in handling the Bible; and when they came to preach their hearts were sadly out of tune for the holy occupation. So they got rid of it if they could, and repeated a Latin mass in its stead, with which most of the people were better pleased than they would have been with an awakening, soul-stirring sermon, which might have disturbed their quiet. And when they could not consistently avoid preaching they retailed to the people stories of pretended saints, while Jesus Christ, the Saviour, was seldom the subject of their discourses.

THE
REFORMATION IN ENGLAND.



THE

REFORMATION IN ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

GROSSETE AND WICLIF.

It has been generally supposed that we are indebted to Germany for the great Reformation. This is a mistake. England is rather its true parent. Even as far back as the reign of Henry II., in the twelfth century, we observe the spirit of the Reformers at work in the hearts of the English people. When the Constitutions of Clarendon were passed by Henry and his barons, one of which provided that all priests should be tried by secular authority, it was one step. If the pope complained, as he did, and if the impious Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, left the kingdom in a fit of rage, it only shows that old England was not even then perfectly under the thumb of Rome.

And when that famous dispute arose, as to the archbishopric, between the Augustine monks on one side and the king and clergy on the other, in which the pope names an archbishop who is obnoxious to both, John, weak as he was, dared to dispute the pope's right. Then Rome pronounced its interdict, by which the people of England were deprived of all religious services; the churches were closed everywhere; the sacraments were unadministered, and the

dead thrown into their graves without the burial rites. Marriages could not take place, and the priests throughout the realm refused to perform the smallest office, in obedience to their head in Rome. Besides this, the pope, assuming the ownership of England, bestowed it on the king of France, with about as much right to do so as the devil of old, when he offered to give away all the kingdoms of this world.

The king was now alarmed, and submitted his crown to the pope, and swore that he would hold it from him and pay him tribute. The barons, however, were not so abject. They protested against being sold like slaves, even to the Bishop of Rome, and therefore assembled with their retainers and soldiers and took possession of London. In June, 1215, at Runnymede, the king was forced to sign the celebrated "*Magna Charta*," which secured certain liberties to the people of England. It was not long before the pope, who was ready enough, even at so great a distance, to scent anything that looked like liberty, pronounced it void; but so far were the barons and people from yielding, that in the reign of Henry III., the next king, they summoned a parliament, *then* called the *mad* parliament, which deprived the king of much of his ancient power, and in the same reign, by a determined struggle, organized the House of Commons of the English parliament.

These were all steps toward the Reformation, for they were opening the way for the independence of the public mind.

About this time Robert Grossetête appeared. He was born in the county of Suffolk in the year 1175. He was a man of great piety and devotion to God; and though his advantages were few when a young man, yet, taking pains to acquire a good education,

he rose by degrees until he was made Bishop of Lincoln. This high position he used to spread evangelical religion wherever his influence could reach.

He called together the ministers who were under his charge at stated times, and endeavored to teach them the various duties required by the religion of Jesus Christ. When he was seventy-eight years of age the pope commanded him to bestow an important benefice on a young man, an Italian, whom the good bishop knew was unfit for the holy office. Though a Roman Catholic in name, yet with a decision and courage which do honor to his age, he positively refused to obey, saying: "No man can obey such mandates with a good conscience. On the contrary, every faithful Christian ought to oppose them with all his might." This was strong language to use toward the pope, coming as it did from a bishop of his own Church, and shows that he had adopted a cardinal principle of Protestantism, namely, to obey God rather than man.

When he died the pope exclaimed in triumph: "I rejoice, and let every true son of the Church rejoice with me, that my great enemy is removed."

Matthew Paris the historian, who lived at the same time, though a Roman Catholic and a Benedictine monk, says of this noble bishop:

"He was the open reprobator of my lord the pope, and of the king as well as the prelates. He was the corrector of monks, the director of priests, the instructer of the clergy, the patron of scholars, a preacher to the laity, and the scourge of lazy and selfish Romanists." The same writer declares that he was a devout and humble man, and a diligent, venerable, and indefatigable bishop.

If a Romish bishop could thus bear public testi-

mony against the abuses of his Church, and a Romish historian of his own age could record it, and both escape the martyr's crown, it shows that the spirit of reform, which had refused to be sold to Rome in the time of John, and which had extorted "Magna Charta" from their king, was not extinct in England.

In the year 1324, just seventy-one years after the death of Bishop Grossetete, John Wiclid* was born in Yorkshire, England. Very properly has he been called the morning star of the Reformation. He was truly a Protestant in this early and dark age of the Church, for his whole life was a protest against the errors of Rome. The great work which he accomplished, and which has brought his name down with honor to our times, is his translation of the Bible. It had proved a lamp to his feet, and he desired that others should enjoy its light. He was the first who gave it to the people in the English language. How strange it now seems to live in an age when there was no Bible in the tongue of the people; when if read at all it must be read in Hebrew, Latin, Greek, or some other foreign language! The venerable Bede had translated the Gospel of John, and some of the Psalms had been translated by King Alfred, with perhaps some other fragments; but these had grown so ancient that they were hardly in the language of the masses. Such was the state of England, as to Scriptural knowledge, previous to the time of this great reformer.

Wiclid when at college became distinguished for his great learning, while at the same time the study of the Scriptures gave him the most intense delight, so that he was called, while yet a young man, Dr. Evan-

* Sometimes spelled Wickliffe and Wyckliffe.

gelicus. Finding in the word of God that the practices of the begging friars were not in accordance with the divine commandments, he zealously opposed them. When he was thirty-seven years of age he was made master or president of Balliol College. At forty-one he was appointed warden of Canterbury Hall. Now he enjoyed the affection and esteem of the highest dignitaries in the Church, notwithstanding that his views differed so widely from the friars and from Rome, which shows still that the clergy were not all slaves of the Romish Church. Soon he published a tract charging the monks with holding fifty errors which he enumerated. When he was fifty years of age, being appointed with others by the king an ambassador to Rome to settle some ecclesiastical disputes, he became more than ever convinced of the corruption of Romanism, because he saw it with his own eyes, and when he returned home he preached everywhere the true doctrines of the Bible, and protested against those of the papal Church.

It was now time for the triple-crowned beast to wake in his lair. Sending a mandate to England, he directed Wiclif to be imprisoned, and if found guilty of preaching the doctrines of the Bible, to be punished. The archbishop and the Bishop of London proceeded to execute the pope's commandment. But the University of Oxford would not give him up. The archbishop and bishop then issued a writ commanding the chancellor of the university to bring Wiclif before them. On the day appointed the great reformer appeared, but he was accompanied by powerful champions. The celebrated John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, son of Edward III., and Harry Percy, earl-marshall of the kingdom, were by his

side. Before the trial could proceed far Harry Percy and the Bishop of London fell into a quarrel, and the court was broken up and Wiclif escaped.

Five years later, being attacked by a dangerous disease, the priests thought they might induce him to recant upon his dying bed; so four of them called on him and reminded him of his supposed errors, and hoped that in his last moments he would confess. He listened to them in perfect silence. Then he asked his servants to raise his head, and strong in faith, he fixed his eyes upon them, and instead of making the confession they hoped for, replied: "I shall not die, but live, and again declare the evil deeds of the friars." The priests hastily retired, and Wiclif recovered and renewed the battle. A year afterward he finished his great work, the translation of the Bible.

God seems to have restrained his enemies until this was accomplished, for shortly afterward the priests succeeded in obtaining a decree from the king, by which Wiclif was expelled from the university, and ordering that his publications should be everywhere seized and destroyed. The pope then cited him to appear at Rome to be tried as a heretic. Wiclif forwarded a letter in reply, saying that Christ had instructed him to the contrary, and taught him to obey God rather than man. His health soon failed, yet still this devoted minister of God constantly preached the doctrines of the Bible, until in the year 1384, four years after he had given the word of God to his countrymen, he died. Such was the rancor of his enemies that some time after his death they dug up his bones and burned them.

The circulation of the Scriptures in English was a terrible blow to Romanism. It is true the printing-

press was not then in existence, and it was necessary to write out every copy with the pen; yet copies were made everywhere, and they were read by the nobility, by the middle classes, by the poor, in the cities, in the country, from one end of the kingdom to the other. Many a poor wanderer who had been groping in spiritual darkness, found in them light and peace. Many a guilty child of Adam, as he mournfully inquired, "O where shall rest be found?" here leaned upon the promises of God. Many a sorrowful heart, overtaxed and overloaded by the ceremonies of Rome, here learned to distinguish between the commandments of men and the commandments of God; between a load of vain observances, and the service of him whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light. Thank God for this first translation of the Bible into the English language! Multitudes adopted the opinions of Wiclif in England, and were furiously persecuted, until it was supposed they were completely destroyed. Their blood flowed on all sides. Lords and peasants, rich and poor, sealed their testimony with their lives. Their prison yet remains in England. It is called the Lollard's prison. It is lined with thick oak plank. The door is nearly covered with the heads of iron spikes. The iron rings to which those who read and loved Wiclif's Bible were chained are still there, about five feet from the floor; and upon the walls, carved in the oaken plank, are to be seen some of the precious promises of the word of God, cut there in that gloomy prison by those who had no other support. These promises were their hope and strength when all human consolation had fled forever. Could we follow them to the place of execution, and behold them as they willingly gave their lives for Christ, and see victim after victim as

they fell, it might lead us to realize that our trials and our crosses are exceeding light. But could we follow them further on, and behold them after their warfare is accomplished and their sufferings over, and witness their joys with Christ in heaven, who would not press forward to the attainment of the same felicity?

CHAPTER II.

L O R D C O B H A M.

I HAVE said that England was the true parent of the Reformation, rather than Germany. D'Aubigné, in his great work, though not distinctly stating this fact, says that Wiclif was the first Reformer of Christendom, and that to him, under God, Britain is indebted for the honor of being the foremost in the attack upon the theocratic system of the pope.* He says again that after Wiclif's death England was almost won over to the Reformer's doctrine.† And again, that the opinions of Wiclif had spread over all Christendom.‡ An eminent writer has lately said: "The Reformation began in England under the labors of John Wiclif, in the fourteenth century." "The Reformation under Luther and the English Reformers was but a revival of the glorious work of God which two centuries before had made a deadly thrust at the man of sin."§

It is right that we should be well acquainted with the men who carried on this work after Wiclif's death. They are the heroes of their age, and more deserve to be carried down to posterity than those who have distinguished themselves by the sword.

* Vol. v, p. 104.

† Vol. v, p. 107.

‡ Vol. i, p. 101.

§ Dr. George Peck, Methodist Quarterly Review, January, 1858.

Lord Cobham* was one of the most illustrious of these in England. He lived about one hundred years before Luther rose in Germany. Notwithstanding the wealth and high position which he inherited by birth, he became an humble Christian. The Bible, as it had been translated by Wiclf, became the guide of his life. As an officer in the king's army he was, says a historian, "one of the bravest and best in England." As a member of the Parliament he never failed to advocate the religious and civil liberty of the people. Hence he became greatly beloved by the whole nation, with the exception of the Romish clergy and their adherents. Having felt the peace of God and the joys of religion in his own heart, with that love to all men which is like a fire in the breast of every true Christian, he desired to communicate it to others. He therefore hired men to copy the Bible and other works of Wiclf, and employed persons, something like the colporteurs of our day, to distribute them abroad. He devoted also much of his income to maintaining traveling preachers in the dioceses of London, Canterbury, Rochester, and Hereford.

This did not suit the bishops and priests, and they therefore began to contrive how they could put an end to him. But Lord Cobham was in favor with the king, and highly popular, and they dared not attack him openly.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, requested the king to send commissioners to Oxford to inquire into the growth of heresy. With this the king complied, and the commissioners reported that heresy was increasing, and that Lord Cobham was the cause of it, because he encouraged the scholars of

* His title originally was Sir John Oldcastle.

Oxford and other places to preach their heretical opinions through the country. In other words, Lord Cobham was an archheretic, because he was the means of preaching to the people the truths of the Bible and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The world has always had need of many more such heretics.

Taking this report, the archbishop and a large number of priests called on the king, and begged in all humility and charity that his majesty would suffer them, for Christ's sake, to put Lord Cobham to death. The king replied that he thought such violence would destroy truth rather than error, and that he himself would see Lord Cobham and reason with him. Henry V., the hero of Harfleur, conqueror of France, and the great warrior of his age, had little idea of true religion. He expected to be obeyed. He sent for Lord Cobham, and reasoned with him as to his doctrines and faith, exhorting him to renounce his supposed errors and yield obedience to the pope. The noble soldier and Christian disdained any kind of equivocation, and replied :

“I have ever been a faithful subject to my king, next to my God, and hope I ever shall be. As for the dominion of the pope, I never could see on what foundation it is claimed, nor can I pay *him* any obedience; for as sure as God's word is true, it is fully evident to me that he is the great antichrist foretold in holy writ.”

The king was displeased with this answer, and he thereupon gave the archbishop leave to proceed against Lord Cobham as he chose, who was summoned speedily before the archbishop, and excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church.

He now prepared a statement of his faith, and

came with it to the king. Henry refused to receive it, and told him to give it to his judges. Being cited again he refused to appear, and was committed to the Tower.

On September 23, 1413, he was brought before the archbishop, who endeavored to lead him to a recantation.

“We must believe,” said the archbishop to him, “what the holy Church of Rome teaches, without demanding Christ’s authority.” And the priests seconded what the prelate asserted, and cried out “Believe! believe!”

Lord Cobham replied: “I am willing to believe all that God desires, but I can never believe that the pope has authority to teach what is contrary to Scripture.”

He was taken back to his prison.

Two days afterward he was again taken before his enemy, and as it was with our blessed Lord and Saviour, was loaded with insults by the priests. They surrounded him on all sides with abusive language. Then the archbishop called on him to confess his offense. He fell on his knees, and lifting up his hands to heaven exclaimed :

“I confess to thee, O God, and acknowledge that in my frail youth I seriously offended thee by my pride, anger, intemperance, and impurity; for these offenses I implore thy mercy.” Then standing up, his face wet with tears, he said: “I ask not your absolution; it is God’s only that I need.”

The archbishop stood up, and all the priests and people arose with uncovered heads, while the priestly judge read the sentence of death.

He was again placed in the Tower, and now seeing that death awaited him planned an escape from his

prison. One night he succeeded, and fled to Wales, where he remained a fugitive for four years.

During that time Wiclif's Bible and Wiclif's writings were found to be doing their work all throughout England. It had not been in vain that Lord Cobham had labored for their dissemination. Even in Europe they had been circulated to an amazing extent. And though the devoted man, who was now a fugitive from home and country for his zeal and faithfulness, seemed to be checked in his career of usefulness, the truths of the Bible were taking too deep root in the hearts of the people ever to be exterminated.

At the expiration of four years Lord Cobham was captured in Wales and delivered up to his old enemy, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Huss and Jerome had been burned on the continent, and this seemed to give a new impetus to persecution in Great Britain. The Roman Catholic Church hoped completely and finally to extirpate heresy. The fate of Lord Cobham was therefore hurried with all the ardor and zeal of priestly hatred, and a day was fixed for his execution.

Who was now to carry on the work of copying the Bible? Who was to pay the expenses of colporteurs and encourage them in their hazardous work? Who was to support the itinerant preachers who were spreading the knowledge of a crucified Saviour among the English people? Was the devoted man who was ready with his pen, ready with his lips, ready with his fortune, and even ready, according to the custom of the times, with his sword to defend the Gospel, was he to be taken away? The day appointed arrived, and found him prepared to give his life for Him whom he loved and served. Men entered

his prison and bound his arms behind his back, and as they led him forth the people looked at his countenance to see how he was about to meet death. It was not sad, but cheerful, as if He who had once walked with the three Hebrews had spoken to him in his prison. No doubt but that the Saviour, to whom he had committed all, was in that moment very, very near to him. No doubt then there was a glory about the promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee," which *we* seldom realize. He was just entering the valley of the shadow of death, but seemed to fear no evil, because Christ was with him.

At last he came to the place of execution. They dragged him there upon a hurdle of sticks, and the journey must have seemed a long one. He saw the gallows, and the iron chains by which he was to be suspended, and he knew that he must die for Christ. He fell upon his knees and, like Stephen and like his divine Master, prayed that God would forgive his enemies. He then arose and addressed the multitude of people who were around him. Many of them probably were his friends, and loved the Bible. He exhorted them to be faithful in keeping its commandments, and then placed himself in the hands of his executioners with the courage of a hero and the patience of a martyr.

They fastened chains around his waist, and drew him up from the ground, and below they kindled a fire which they caused to burn slowly; and there the priests of that Church which claims to be the first and only Church of Him who was meek and lowly in heart, gradually roasted until he died the illustrious Lord Cobham, because he read and loved the Bible.

Thus, in the year 1417, passed from earth to heaven one of the noblest champions of the truth of God.

CHAPTER III.

FAUST — ERASMUS — BILNEY.

LORD COBHAM is only one example of great numbers who laid down their lives for Christ in those perilous times when the word of God began to be translated into the language of the people. They died in the flames; they languished and died in their prisons; they died on the rack, and gave their testimony one after another to the strength of that grace which comes from a present Saviour. Christians give their testimony now, and even sometimes hesitate to give it in favor of Him who hath lived and died for them. They give their testimony in those peaceful and undisturbed meetings which are appointed for the purpose of speaking one to another; but how little they think of the tortures, the fires, the blood through which the witnesses of Christ have passed in former years.

We will leave these scenes and pass to another step in the great Reformation. About twenty years after Cobham was burned printing was invented. The year 1438 gave birth to an art which was to multiply and scatter the Scriptures as men could never before have conceived. It is remarkable that God did not give to man this wonderful art while he was fast bound in the night of Romanism. But when light began to be received into the hearts of those who were truly sincere, when they began to struggle with their fetters, then it was that God bestowed upon them a power which was to become like the wished for fulcrum of Archimedes. The Bible was

copied not by hand, but by movable metallic type. John Faust (or Fust) came with his press to Paris, and, as we are told,* began to print and sell his Bibles. One after another the purchasers came, until men began to wonder how he could write them off so rapidly. He must be a ready writer, they thought, and his pen must have a strange power to produce those volumes which he sold every day to the people; or else he must employ a great many men to do this work for him. But this could not be, they reasoned, for the handwriting was too uniform. They took up a copy and looked at the pages, and they found the first page, the middle, and the last all in the same character. It must be, they said, all the work of one man. But what was their astonishment when they found that every copy, every Bible was exactly the same. They came to him and asked him how it was accomplished. Faust would not tell them, says our chronicler, and kept his printing press concealed. It became noised abroad through the city, and every one was amazed as they examined the Bibles they had bought, when they saw that even every dot, every cross, every flourish of the pen was the same.

At last it came to the ears of the priests, and they soon decided the matter. It was the work of witchcraft, they said. True, it was not much like the employment of the devil, to be working so diligently in writing off numerous copies of the Bible; but their theory was that the more the Bible was placed in the hands of the people the more heretics were multiplied, and as the devil was the natural father of heresies and heretics, it must be a new and ingenious trick on the part of the prince of darkness to take up the quill and turn himself into a religious scribe.

* London Encyclopedia. Article, "Fust."

The letters, too, did not look as if they had been traced by a human hand, they were so deeply set in the paper, and the ink was so curiously black ; they were satisfied it was just such ink as Satan would use. And those curiously wrought characters in red, they were neither more nor less than the blood of the magician himself. It must be so ; and a warrant was therefore issued for the arrest of Faust, and he was taken and cast into prison on the charge of witchcraft. Apprehending serious consequences he revealed his secret, showed his press, and was finally discharged. In other places the mighty power of the press began to be used also, sometimes, alas ! for evil, but often for good. In the march of mind the translation of the Scriptures into the language of the people of the different nations was one step ; their circulation by the press was another important one.

We will come to a third. A man called Gerard lived in Holland, and there loved the daughter of a physician, whose name was Margaret. Gerard had nine brothers who wished him to become a monk. His parents joined his brothers in soliciting him to do so, but Gerard had no disposition for such a life. It may be that his attachment to Margaret formed the chief obstacle to his embracing perpetual celibacy. Rather than do so he abandoned his country and friends, and went to Rome. Not long afterward Margaret gave birth to a son. He was not informed of it, but, on the contrary, his parents wrote to him that the physician's daughter was dead. Filled with sorrow, he hesitated no longer to yield to the wishes of his family, and in a short time became a priest of the Romish Church, taking consequently upon him the vows of single life. In time he returned to Holland, and there found Margaret still living. As a

priest he could not marry her, and she would never marry another. There was one bond of union between them, however, and that was their little son. The most tender care was taken of him by his mother, while his father bestowed every pains upon his education. While he was yet young Margaret died, and his father, broken-hearted, was soon afterward laid in his grave. The child they left became afterward the great and learned Erasmus.

Erasmus, when yet a young man, was urged, as his father had been urged, to become a monk. He refused until his guardians defrauded him of his property, and then, forced, as it were, by necessity, took upon him the vows of a priest. In the mean time, while suffering the greatest poverty, he made every effort to obtain knowledge, purchasing books, it is said, before he would even purchase clothes for himself. Having completed his education, he obtained a living by teaching. At thirty years of age one of his pupils (Lord Mountjoy) invited him to England. This was in the year 1497. There he became intimate with several learned men, and from them no doubt received ideas as to the Bible which afterward influenced his life. The next thirteen years he spent in France, and other countries on the continent. In the year 1510 he returned to England, where he continued four years, and was appointed professor of divinity in Cambridge. He then went to Basle, and in the year 1516 published his celebrated New Testament in Greek and Latin, with notes. This was before Luther took his stand against indulgences. Previous to this Erasmus had acquired a great reputation for learning, and his New Testament was eagerly read in the universities and everywhere by the learned, and produced a great commotion in England, France, Ger-

many, and other countries of Christendom. It raised a storm which he himself did not expect. So truly is it that the word of God is a two-edged sword wherever it penetrates.

The priests were frightened, and began to express their alarm.

"Here are horrible heresies," exclaimed one.

"If this book is allowed it will be the death of the Roman Catholic Church," said another. "We must turn this man out of the Church."

"Look here," said another; "this New Testament commands men to repent instead of to do penance."

Another cried out: "He's a heretic, a forger of lies, he's a goose; what do I say? he's a very anti-christ!"

Another said: "In this New Testament there are three hundred dangerous, frightful passages. Three hundred, did I say? There are more than a thousand! If we do not stop this leak it will sink the ship."

Erasmus himself was thunderstruck. He had no idea of raising such a commotion. But his Greek and Latin Testament went on doing the work among the learned that Wyclif's Bible had done among the people. Everywhere men were to be seen studying it. His enemies said afterward: "Erasmus laid the egg which Luther hatched."

One example will be sufficient to show how the word of God penetrated into the hearts of multitudes who sincerely studied it.

Thomas Bilney was a young man of fine education, who was earnestly trying to do the will of God. But he found that he could not overcome his sins. His conscience became thoroughly aroused. He felt that he must obey Christ or he was fit for neither death nor

heaven. Being a Roman Catholic, he had recourse to the priests in confession, who prescribed various penances; but these gave him no relief. He paid them for masses and indulgences until he found his purse empty, and his conscience just as burdened as it was before. Being of a feeble constitution his body wasted away, and he knew not what to do. "Alas!" he cried, "my last state is worse than the first." How many in the darkness of Romanism have thus struggled, like Bilney, for light and peace!

One day he heard his friends talking about the Greek and Latin Testament of Erasmus. "Perhaps," he said to himself, "there may be something in it which will heal my burdened soul."

But he feared to obtain it because it was forbidden by the priests. "Yet," he reasoned to himself, "is it not the Testament of Jesus Christ?"

At last he determined that he would have it, and going by stealth to where it was sold in secret, he bought it with trembling and fled to his room. There, with his forbidden treasure, he shut himself up and opened the book. The first words which met his eye were these: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He read the passage over and over again, and exclaimed: *O mihi suavissimam Pauli sententiam!* Literally, "O most pleasant assertion of Paul to me!" His heart was melted down, and he found his thirsty soul refreshed with the waters of life. In a letter to Tonstal, Bishop of London, he gives him an account of his conversion. Referring to the text just named, he says:

"This one sentence, through God's instruction and inward working, did so exhilarate my heart, which before was wounded with the guilt of my sins, and

almost in despair, that immediately I found wonderful comfort and quietness in my soul, so that my bruised bones leaped for joy. After this the Scriptures became sweeter to me than honey or the honeycomb; for by them I learned that all my travails, fastings, watchings, redemption of masses, and pardons, without faith in Christ were but, as St. Augustine calls them, 'a hasty running out of the right way,' and as the fig leaves, which could not cover Adam's nakedness. And as Adam could find no rest to his guilty soul till he believed in the promise of God, that Christ, the seed of the woman, should tread upon the serpent's head, so neither could I find deliverance from the sharp stings and bitings of my sins till I was taught of God that lesson which Christ spoke of in the third chapter of John: 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' As soon as, by the grace of God, I began to taste the sweets of this heavenly lesson, which no man can teach, but God alone, who revealed it to Peter, I begged of the Lord to increase my faith. And at last I desired nothing more than that I, being so comforted by him, might be strengthened by his Holy Spirit and grace that I might teach sinners his ways, which are mercy and truth, and that the wicked might be converted unto him by me, who also was once myself a sinner indeed."

Bilney was not allowed to enjoy this peace in quiet. He was afterward burned to death for Christ's sake. The night before his martyrdom some friends visited him in prison and expressed their surprise at his perfect cheerfulness. Bilney put his hand into the flame of the candle and replied: "I feel by experience that the fire is warm, yet I am persuaded

by God's holy word, and by the experience of some spoken of in it, that in the flame they felt no heat; and though my body shall be wasted, yet joy unspeakable shall follow."

The next day his body was burned to ashes.

CHAPTER IV.

LATIMER CONVERTED—TRIUMPHS OF THE BIBLE— MARTYRDOM OF JOHN BROWN.

HUGH LATIMER is a name intimately connected with that of Bilney. He was a zealous and well-meaning Romanist, and according to the dictates of his conscience, made sincere efforts to serve God. He as well as Bilney was in the University of Cambridge, and when he received his degree of bachelor of divinity preached a discourse against the doctrines which were then agitating Germany. His sermon was much spoken of. Bilney, who heard it, thought if such a young man could be gained over to the true Gospel how powerful an instrument he would be to accomplish good. How could it be done? He knew it was a difficult task; but he was resolved to try.

He went to Latimer's study, and told him he wished to confess. And there, in the privacy of that solitary chamber, he poured upon his heart the burning story of his own conversion. He told him of the load which he had once felt upon his own soul. He told him of the struggles which he had made to remove it. He told him how carefully he had observed the precepts of the Church, and how vain it had been to him. **And when he came to describe how he looked to Jesus**

and believed, and trusted in him, and relied upon him, and loved him, there was something in his voice which went to the very depths of Latimer's heart. The same Jesus who had said, "Lo, I am with you always!" was helping him. But when he came to describe the joy which he felt, and the witness which he had received that God had taken away his sins, the heart of Latimer burned with new sensations, and there the holy Spirit imparted to him the same peace, the same joy, the same witness which Bilney had described. From that hour the course of his life was changed, and his talents, his piety, his eloquence were consecrated to the cause of the Reformation. His sufferings and martyrdom for Christ will be referred to in another place.

As the Scriptures were the true cause of the change going on now in England, we must observe how they were spread among the people. As it has been already remarked, the New Testament of Erasmus in Greek was doing its work in the universities, among the learned. It is remarkable that in the great Reformation three hundred years ago men were raised up from the seats of learning, much as John and Charles Wesley, with their companions at Oxford, were raised up a hundred years ago to reform the Church again. But the people could not read Greek, and the English language had so greatly changed since the time of Wiclif that his translation, which Cobham had circulated, no longer answered their wants.

William Tyndale, of Oxford College, conceived the grand idea of translating the Bible afresh. He began the work, but persecution and the fear of discovery drove him from Oxford to Cambridge, then to the residence of Sir John Walsh, then to the house of Humphrey Monmouth, in London. At last he is

obliged to fly from England and seek a refuge in Germany. He finishes Matthew and Mark at Hamburg. At Cologne he is discovered, and his precious work on the point of being seized. He finishes the New Testament at Worms, and notwithstanding severe laws against it, the word of God is printed in a foreign country, transported and scattered all over England. In the year 1535, assisted by Miles Coverdale, the whole Bible is translated into the English language.

It was a severe struggle, however, to carry the work through all the difficulties they were obliged to encounter. In those days, as well as now, men were forced to eat and drink to live, and translating and printing the Bible, though a grand and glorious business spiritually, was a very poor one financially. Tyndale and Coverdale were therefore often at their wits' end. Even if they could have lived on air themselves their workmen could not, and to pay the printer was just as necessary then as now. Men were not as ready to buy Bibles then as they are in these happy days, and it was indeed a dangerous matter either to buy or sell one. If Tyndale and Coverdale could have had a prophetic view of the present business of the British and American Bible Societies, what encouragement it would have given them in their work.

At one time Tyndale was in a complete dilemma. He was obliged to stop printing. At this moment Providence raised up an unexpected customer. The Bishop of London was in search of the heretics' books. Especially did he seek that dreadful book, the Bible; dreadful to a wicked priest as well as to a wicked layman. He sent to Germany, to the very city where Tyndale was, and by the intervention of a friend

bought up all the Bibles and Testaments on hand, and took them to London and burned them; while Tyndale, relieved of his embarrassment by the bishop's money, went on, and with it brought out a new and superior edition. It was singular enough to print the English Bible in Germany, and then to send it by sea to England, where multitudes of copies were disembarked unknown to the priests, and sold or given away. Perhaps the very fact that it was a forbidden book caused it sometimes to be sought with more eagerness; and wherever it went it did not lie idly on the shelf. Men who could read read it, and those who could not carried it to a neighbor who had more learning than themselves, and entreated him to read for them. If a man could only spell out the words, he would sit down by his fireside night after night, and slowly read the visions of the prophets or the miracles of Jesus. And many a tear was shed by eyes unaccustomed to weep, as chapter after chapter of the Gospel was read, and men found out how kind, compassionate, and merciful the Saviour was. Some would give a load of hay for a few favorite chapters, and they would sit up all night, with the doors shut, or hide themselves in the woods, to read and reread them. It cost something, however, to possess the love of God in those days, as well as to buy the Bible. The following incident, which occurred before Tyndale's translation was published, will show the spirit of the priesthood, and the danger incurred by opposing them.

A priest on board the passage boat from London to Gravesend observed a fellow-passenger a little nearer to him than seemed consistent with his dignity, or rather with the dignity which he assumed, and he said to him:

“ You are too near me; get further off. Do you know who I am?”

“ No, sir.”

“ Well, then, you must know that I am a priest.”

“ Indeed, sir; are you a parson, or vicar, or a lady’s chaplain?”

“ No; I am a soul-priest; I sing mass to save souls.”

“ Do you, sir? that is well done; and can you tell me where you find the soul when you begin the mass?”

“ I cannot.”

“ And where you leave it when the mass is ended?”

“ I do not know.”

“ What! you do not know where you find the soul, or where you leave it, and yet you say that you save it.”

“ Go thy ways,” the priest replied; “ thou art a heretic, and I will be even with thee.”

The name of this man was John Brown. He was an intelligent and pious Christian, and had caught too much of the spirit of the Bible to obey like a dog the insulting command of a priest to get out of his way.

John Brown went home, and a few days afterward, while seated with his family at the table, the door of his house was suddenly opened, and a constable, accompanied by several assistants, rushed in and seized him at the table. His wife and daughter uttered the most heartrending cries; but the officers pulled him out of the house, tore him from his family, placed him on horseback, and tied his feet under the animal’s belly.

He was thrown into prison, where he lay forty days.

At the end of that time the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Rochester called before them the impudent fellow who doubted whether a priest's mass could save souls, and required him to retract this blasphemy. But Brown replied :

"Christ was once offered to take away the sins of many. It is by this sacrifice we are saved, and not by the repetitions of the priests."

At this reply the archbishop made a sign to the executioners, one of whom took off the shoes and stockings of the pious Christian, while the other brought in a pan of burning coals, upon which they set his feet.

"Confess the efficacy of the mass," the two bishops cried.

"If I deny my Lord upon earth he will deny me before his Father in heaven," he answered.

The flesh was burned off the soles of his feet to the bones, and still he remained unshaken.

The bishops ordered him then to be given over to the secular authority to be burned alive.

The day before he died his wife came to see him. She found him sitting with his feet in the stocks, and as she looked in his countenance she saw how much changed his features were by suffering. She sat down beside him weeping most bitterly, while he, being hindered by his chains, could not even bend toward her. Even if his feet had been free from the stocks he could not have stood on them. He said to her :

"I cannot set my feet to the ground, for the bishops have burned them to the bones ; but they could not burn my tongue, and prevent my confessing the Lord. O Elizabeth ! continue to love him, for he is good, and bring up our children in his fear."

On the following morning he was led to the place of execution and fastened to the stake. His wife and children were present and saw him die. The fagots were lighted, and John Brown, full of confidence in the blood of Christ, clasped his hands and repeated a hymn. Soon he was silent, for the flames had done their work.

Cries of anguish then rent the air. It seemed as if his wife and daughter would lose their senses. As the bystanders shared their compassion and seemed indignant toward their executioners, one of the constables rushed toward his daughter, crying:

“Come along; let us toss the heretic’s children into the flames lest they should one day spring from their father’s ashes.”*

She escaped, however, but never forgot that fearful moment when the executioner’s hand was almost upon her.

Such were the scenes passing in England, while sincere men were struggling to find the way of salvation.

CHAPTER V.

DIVORCE OF HENRY VIII.

WE will now give a brief history of the celebrated divorce of Henry VIII., of which so much has been said.

Henry came to the throne of England in the year 1509. He married Catharine, his deceased brother’s wife, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and aunt of Charles V. After he had lived with her eighteen

* *History of the Reformation*, by Merle D’Aubigné, vol. v., pp. 144, 145.
Hist. Reformation.

years he began to raise doubts as to the lawfulness of his marriage, on the ground that Catharine was his brother's wife, alleging that such a union was forbidden by the Old Testament. We shall not judge Henry too harshly when we say that his scruples were anything but religious scruples. They arose from two sources: his desire for a son, and his desire for the beautiful and accomplished Anne Boleyn. Henry applied to the pope for a divorce, which threw his holiness into a singular dilemma; for if he granted the divorce to Henry he would have Charles V., Catharine's nephew, for his enemy, the weight of whose arms he had already felt; if he refused the divorce then Henry would be offended.

What could he do? He put off the decision from time to time. Cardinal Wolsey, the haughty Archbishop of York, and Chancellor of England, and who was almost as much king as Henry, connived at the delay of the pope, because he knew if Anne Bullen became queen it would be a triumph to the Reformation. At length the pope, urged by Henry, appointed Cardinals Campeggio and Wolsey to decide the matter, with instructions to delay as long as possible, and not to decide at all without further instructions from himself. They delayed until Henry found they were mocking him, when Campeggio hastily left England and returned to Rome.

The divorce question not being yet settled, Thomas Cranmer expressed the opinion that, it being a matter in which the sense of Scripture is concerned, the opinions of the universities should be obtained rather than the decision of the pope; "because," said he, "the pope has no authority to annul Scripture." Henry, hearing of this opinion, made him his *chaplain*, and on March 30, 1533, raised him to be Primate

of England and Archbishop of Canterbury. In May, 1533, Cranmer pronounced sentence of divorce, after a convocation of the clergy had declared the marriage unlawful. In this court all the prelates of England joined, except the Bishop of Rochester. About the same time Henry married Anne Boleyn.

The pope threatened to excommunicate Henry, but the latter defied his authority, and caused one act after another to be passed overthrowing the pope's authority in England, until the pontiff formally and officially declared, with his cardinals, that the marriage of Henry and Catharine was valid, and Henry was pronounced excommunicated if he refused to adhere to it. The king was not a man to draw back, and the next parliament completed the breach by affirming that all payments to the pope, and all provisions, bulls, and dispensations from him were abolished, and that the king was the only earthly head of the Church.

A convocation of the clergy declared in the same year that the Bishop of Rome had, by the law of God, no more jurisdiction in England than any other foreign bishop, and that the authority which he and his predecessors had exercised there was only by usurpation and the sufferance of English princes. This was in the year 1534. Thus ended the pope's sway in England.

It was necessary now to break the power of the pope's adherents in the kingdom, so as to prevent their influence over the minds of the people; and Henry soon after abolished the smaller abbeys, three hundred and seventy-six in number, and appropriated their property and estates to his own use. He soon afterward suppressed the larger ones also. His right to do so arose from the fact that they were

sworn friends of his enemy the pope, and would do all in their power to sustain the pope's authority in England. Besides, he had discovered by inspection so many crimes and superstitions connected with them, and they had absorbed so much of the property of the kingdom, that he alleged it was but justice to his subjects.

One thing is to be particularly remarked. Henry separated England from Rome, *but continued all his life to sustain the Roman Catholic doctrines in England*, so that after all Henry VIII. was the instrument only of producing a change in the head of the Church, and not the cause of the Reformation. That was to be found in the hearts of the English people, thoroughly leavened as they had already become by the doctrines of the Bible.

CHAPTER VI.

ERASMUS AS A REFORMER.

On the twelfth of July, 1536, the great Erasmus died at the age of sixty-nine. Notwithstanding all that has been said against his lukewarmness, he wielded a trusty blade in favor of the Reformation.

As early as the year 1500, long before Luther was heard of in the theological world, he had acquired the reputation of being an eminent man of letters all throughout Europe. A year before Luther spoke out against the indulgences of Tetzel he published his New Testament in Greek, which did its work among the learned everywhere in Christendom. Not long afterward his famous "Colloquies" were produc-

ing the same result among students in the quiet recesses of their schools.

“His heart,” says Rose,* “was certainly with the Reformers.”

“He refused,” says another, “a benefice offered by the pope, and was indifferent as to a cardinalship.”†

He long took the side of Luther, and spoke of him as follows :

“Luther has committed two unpardonable crimes ; he has touched the pope upon the crown and the monks upon the belly.”

“I know that a bishopric is at my service if I would but write against Luther ; but Luther is a man of too great abilities for me to encounter ; and to say the truth, I learn more from one page of his than all the volumes of Thomas Aquinas.”

Again, he says that Luther’s doctrine was right in the main, but that it had not been delivered by him with a proper temper and with due moderation.

At last, when the acute mind of Erasmus saw that Luther was adopting the severe doctrines of Calvin on the predestination of one part of the human race, and the reprobation of the other part, he wrote against this doctrine alone. And lo ! a cry is raised that he has attacked the Reformation at the instigation of Rome. But where is the proof ? He received no bishopric, no cardinalship for his pains. And if he had been writing for Rome he would surely have advocated some of her peculiar doctrines other than free will.

The work he published was the “Diatribé de Libero Arbitrio,” “A Discourse on Free Will,” written,

* Biographical Dictionary, article Erasmus.

† French Biog. Dic. in 84 vols. Paris : 1815. Article, Erasmus.

as his accusers allow, in a strain of mildness and candor. Luther replied, with his usual impetuosity and severity, in a work called "De Servo Arbitrio," "On the Bondage of the Will." Erasmus rejoined by his "Hyperaspistes."

We may blame him for receiving pensions from Roman Catholic courts, but he had earned them by his literary labors; and if *they* would give them to a man who had written so much against Rome, it would not much help the reform for him to refuse them.

We do blame him for continuing all his life in the papal Church; but his death was not the death of a Romanist. He died among Protestants, calling on no saints, but on God and Christ, and using none of the Romish ceremonies appointed for the dying.

"There is no necessity," says one of his biographers, "to suppose that he acted against his conscience in adhering to the Church of Rome; no, he persuaded himself that he did as much as piety and prudence required from him in censuring her defects."

"We and all the nations of Europe are infinitely obliged to Erasmus for spending a long and laborious life in opposing ignorance and superstition, and in promoting literature and true piety."*

We shall have occasion to refer to Erasmus again.

* Jortin's Life of Erasmus.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SIX AND TEN ARTICLES — HENRY VIII. AND HIS WIVES.

WE have said that Henry VIII. did not reform the Church. Neither did he himself change materially either in doctrines or morals. He commenced life a Romanist and ended it so, in all but submission to the pope. In early life he wrote a work against Luther in favor of the seven sacraments, for which the pope rewarded him with the title of "Defender of the Faith," and he continued to oppose whatever he saw of true piety until the last. That Henry changed not, and that the nation was not changed by him, appears from the passage of the six articles, sometimes called the whip with the six strings. They are in substance as follows:

1. The doctrine of transubstantiation is confirmed.
2. The cup is forbidden in the sacrament.
3. The marriage of priests is forbidden.
4. Vows of celibacy declared obligatory.
5. Private masses for souls in purgatory upheld.
6. Auricular confession to be retained.

For unbelief in the first of these articles the unfortunate doubter was to be burned at the stake. For unbelief in any of the other five hanging was the sentence. In all cases lands and goods were to be forfeited. Many were convicted, burned, and hanged in England for not believing in the six articles. It is strange that Rome never hanged, or burned, or imprisoned a man for not believing in Christ; but if he could not believe that a little round

wafer, which looked like a wafer, felt like a wafer, and tasted like a wafer—if he could not believe that this was the very body, the very flesh and blood of Christ, the identical substance which was crucified on Calvary, then he was led to the stake and burned to death. O Rome, Rome, to what lengths of crime and folly thou hast led thy votaries!

In the year 1536, and consequently after Henry had broken with the pope, ten articles were concluded on by a convocation of clergy, which show how much of Rome there was yet found in those who ruled England. Some of them are as follows:

Images are allowed.

Prayers to saints allowed.

Purgatory defended.

Transubstantiation asserted.

Infants dying before baptism are declared to be damned everlasting, without hope even of getting into purgatory. It was a fortunate thing for the innocent babes born in England at this time, that the convocation of clergy which pronounced their final condemnation had no power to carry their sentence into execution, and to deliver over the little ones actually to the devil. The following questions, which the pious Bishop Hooper was in the habit of asking the clergy on his primary visitation, indicate certainly no great attainments in theological knowledge.

“How many commandments are there?”

“Where were they written?”

“Can you say them by heart?”

“What are the articles of the Christian faith?”

“Can you repeat them?”

“Can you recite the Lord’s Prayer?”

“How do you know it to be the Lord’s Prayer?”

One of the ten articles, however, strikes a terrible blow at Romanism. It asserts that we are justified by faith in Christ only; by the merits of his death and sufferings, and not by any merit of our own works.

If Henry VIII. of England did not change in doctrines, neither did he in morals. We have no disposition to hide what he was; but in doing so we give all the credit of his character to the Romish Church. She educated him; she made him what he was, whether he continued to obey the pope or not.

The licentious monarch was soon tired of the beauty of Anne Boleyn. He did not take as much trouble to separate from her as he did to obtain his divorce from Catharine. She was soon beheaded. The next day he married Jane Seymour. In the mean time the fires of Smithfield blazed around those who refused to believe the religious doctrines of their king. It happened that three Roman Catholics did not believe exactly as Henry wished, and he burned them with three Protestants, the Romanists declaring that the worst part of their punishment was being coupled in death with such heretical miscreants as the Protestants.

Jane Seymour did not live long. She died two days after the birth of a son, who afterward became Edward VI. After her death Henry took a good deal of pains to find a wife who might suit him, and at last fell in love with a picture of Anne of Cleves, and immediately took measures to marry her. She came to England, and he hastened to see her; but was much disappointed at finding her very unlike the picture, and declared that he never could love her. To make it worse, she could speak nothing but Dutch,

and Henry did not understand this, and so she was not very likely to win him by her conversation.

However, in the year 1539 he married, and in the year 1540 divorced her; but instead of beheading, he very complaisantly adopted her as his sister.

He then married Catharine Howard. She was executed, and he afterward married his sixth and last wife, Catharine Parr.

Among all these we admire none more than his first wife, Catharine of Arragon. She was a strict Roman Catholic, and yet so true to her faithless husband, so sorrowful in her grief at the thought of separation from him, that we cannot but sympathize with her.

When she was cited before Wolsey and Campeggio as legates of the pope, she rose from her seat, went to the king, and fell on her knees before him in presence of the whole assembly, and said, with tears in her eyes:

“Sir, I beseech you for all the love that hath been between us, and for the love of God, let me have justice and right. Take some pity on me, for I am a poor woman and a stranger, born out of your dominions. I have here no assured friend, much less impartial counsel, and I flee to you as to the head of justice within this realm. Alas, sir, wherein have I offended you, or what occasion given you of displeasure, that you should wish to put me from you? I take God and all the world to witness that I have been to you a true, humble, and obedient wife, ever conformable to your will and pleasure. Never have I said or done aught contrary thereto, being always well pleased and content with all things wherein you had delight; neither did I ever grudge in word or countenance, or show a visage or spark of discontent.

I loved all those whom you loved only for your sake. This twenty years I have been your true wife, and by me ye have had divers children, although it hath pleased God to call them out of this world, which yet hath been no default in me."

She spoke longer, but this is a sufficient sample of her words; and when she finished she bowed low, and seemed to embrace her husband's knees. She then, instead of returning to her seat, moved toward the door. She was called again aloud:

"Catharine, Queen of England, come into court."

Some one said to her: "Madam, you are called back."

"I hear it well enough," she replied, "but go you on, for this is no court wherein I can have justice. Let us proceed."

She returned to her palace, and never would appear in court again.

We cannot help admiring, as we behold this scene, the true devotion of such a wife. She died three years after she was divorced from Henry; and shortly before her death wrote to him an affectionate letter, in which she addressed him as her most dear lord, king, and husband. The concluding words of the letter were: "I make this vow, that mine eyes desire you above all things."

Henry VIII. died in the year 1547. As God made Jehu (wicked though he was) the instrument of breaking the power of the false god Baal, in Israel, so did he make Henry the means of destroying the authority of the pope in England. But Jehu did not bring Israel back to the worship of Jehovah; neither did Henry lead his English subjects to the religion of the Bible.

CHAPTER VIII.

CARDINAL WOLSEY — CROMWELL — CRANMER —
A MARTYR.

BEFORE leaving the reign of Henry VIII. we must devote a few pages to some characters and further events connected with it.

Thomas Wolsey, the son of a butcher, struggled up, by his own ability, to the dignity of cardinal, pope's legate, and chancellor of all England. He lived in great splendor, and having reached the highest pinnacle of honor possible to him in England, he aspired to be pope. In this he never succeeded, but by his intrigues to obtain the triple crown satisfied the king that he held too much power in his hands to be a safe subject. His fall was still more sudden than his rise. One step followed another in quick succession until he was arrested for high treason. He became completely unmanned when he found the king was really against him, and, prostrated by his misfortunes, died in the year 1530.

In the year 1535 John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and the celebrated Sir Thomas More, were executed because they would not acknowledge Henry as head of the Church.

Thomas Cromwell, the son of a blacksmith, was a servant of Cardinal Wolsey, and when the latter was accused, boldly and ably defended him; and though his master fell, Cromwell from that time rose in the estimation of Henry until he made him secretary of state, Earl of Essex, and lord chamberlain. Cromwell has been accused of injustice in his proceedings

connected with the suppression of the monasteries; but having been appointed vicar-general by Henry, to act in this very matter, such an accusation would be made against him by the monasteries suppressed, whether he deserved it or not. Cromwell, though he had so earnestly defended Wolsey, became and always continued to be a firm friend of the Reformation, and whenever he could he promoted its interests. In the year 1540 he was accused of heresy and treason, and executed, his real crime being that he had recommended Anne of Cleves to the king.

Thomas Cranmer, of whom we have already said that he owed his elevation to an opinion he had given on the divorce question, was always true to the Reformers. Accused of heresy, he was protected by Henry, and it has been said that he was the only one to whom the faithless king was faithful. By his means, with Latimer and some others, the Scriptures were published openly, and a copy placed in many of the churches, though the king afterward restricted the reading of them to certain persons of rank and station, and then it had to be done quietly and in good order. But the truth must be told, both of Cromwell and Cranmer, that though favorable to nearly all the principles of the Reformation, yet there were times when they themselves stood in the attitude of persecutors. Perhaps they were influenced by the fear of Henry; perhaps by the widespread idea that it was lawful to destroy heretics. But the true and fundamental cause was, that the Romish Church had educated them to believe that persecution was right. Cranmer long believed that the real presence was in the host, and it is related of him that his opinion on this point was changed by witnessing the courage and patience of the martyrs.

We will close the reign of Henry VIII. by a brief account of the martyrdom of Anne Askew. She is but one of many who suffered in a similar manner.

This lady was descended from a good family, and of an accomplished education. She had embraced the Reformers' doctrines with zeal, and was arrested for her opinions in March, 1545. In her examinations she answered plainly as to her opinions. The following is part of her own account of her sufferings :

"They said to me then that I was a heretic, and condemned by the law, if I would stand in my opinion. I answered that I was no heretic, neither yet deserved I any death by the law of God. But as concerning the faith which I uttered and wrote to the Council, I would not deny it, because I knew it true. Then would they needs know if I would deny the sacrament to be Christ's body and blood. I said: 'Yea, for the same Son of God who was born of the Virgin Mary is now glorious in heaven, and will come again from there at the latter day, like as he went up. And as for that ye call your God, it is a piece of bread. For a proof thereof, mark it when you list; let it lie in the box but three months, and it will be moldy, and so turn to nothing that is good. Whereupon I am persuaded that it cannot be God.'"

Giving a further account of her examination, and other things connected with her imprisonment, she says: "Then did they put me on the rack because I confessed no ladies or gentlemen to be of my opinion, [meaning she did not betray to them those whom she knew to be Christians,] and thereon they kept me a long time; and because I lay still and did not cry, my Lord Chancellor and Mr. Rich took pains to rack me with their own hands till I was nigh dead. The lieutenant then caused me to be loosed from

the rack, when I immediately swooned, and they recovered me again. After that I sat two hours reasoning with my Lord Chancellor, upon the bare floor, where he, with many flattering words, persuaded me to leave my opinions; but my Lord God, I thank his everlasting goodness, gave me grace to persevere, and will do, I hope, to the very end."

And he did so, for she was soon afterward carried to the stake and burned.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DUKE OF SOMERSET AND CRANMER.

THE English Reformation, as we have said, commenced in the time of Wiclif, about 1375. Luther's fame and writings no doubt influenced the English people to some extent, but not sufficiently to suppose that it materially hastened or retarded the great work. It was not until the accession of Edward VI., in 1547, that the great Reformation was acknowledged by the nation. It dwelt before in the hearts of the people and on the lips of the martyrs.

Conspicuous among those who were instrumental in this important change were the Earl of Hertford and Thomas Cranmer. The former was the uncle of the young king, and he became Protector of the realm during the king's minority. Created Duke of Somerset, almost as soon as Henry VIII. died he assumed the direction of Edward's education, and he took care that the books he read and the tutors who instructed him should be thoroughly Protestant.

Too little has been said of what the Duke of Som-

erset accomplished for the reformation of England. He is not behind many whose names have come down with great luster to our times. The king, not ten years of age when his father died, was too young to accomplish much himself; and Cranmer had no authority beyond the limits of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. It is true he was the constant counselor of Somerset; but it was the latter who, step by step, boldly abolished the peculiar practices of Romanism all over the kingdom; and in doing this he conformed to the sentiment of the great mass of the English people. This fact shows how the leaven, which had been at work since the time of Wiclif, had extended.

A most decisive step was to remove the images. But even in this he proceeded with great moderation, for at first he allowed to remain all images which might be supposed not to have been used idolatrously. Afterward, finding it impossible to distinguish between what has been called the reverence for them and the worship of them, an order was issued by which they were taken entirely from the churches, an event which seemed to announce everywhere a complete religious revolution. What a change must have been wrought in those who frequented the churches, when they could go one Sabbath and behold their accustomed idols all throughout the country, and the next Sabbath see that they were gone, and this without tumult or insurrection!

Visitors were appointed to go through all the churches, to correct the morals of the clergy, and to abolish the ancient superstitions. They were directed to restrain the people from sprinkling their beds with holy water, from ringing bells, and using blessed candles to drive away the devil.

The laws against the Lollards and many of the

rigorous statutes against heretics were now repealed, together with the famous "six articles." The cup was allowed to the laity; private masses were abolished; candles were forbidden to be carried about on Candlemas-day, ashes on Ash-Wednesday, and palms on Palm-Sunday. Priests were also allowed to marry.

And as the advancing intelligence of the people demanded the public prayers to Almighty God to be in a language understood by them, some of the best prayers of the Roman Catholic service, which had come down from a time when the Church existed in a comparatively pure state, were translated; other prayers were added to them, and these were incorporated in what is now known as the book of Common Prayer of the English Church. In this was manifest the wisdom of Somerset and Cranmer. Whatever was good in Romanism they were anxious to retain, not only in the public services of religion, but in the hearts of the people, lest they should throw away all faith, as men did in the French Revolution, and go over to infidelity and atheism.

It has been asserted that these reformers of England did not go far enough. This is certainly true; but it should be spoken to their praise rather than otherwise. They were unwilling to overturn the religious sentiment of the nation, and they could go further as they gained more light. And this they did, for in the same reign the book of Common Prayer was revised, and oil in confirmation, extreme unction, and prayers for the dead, were left out. About fifty years afterward, in the reign of James I., it was revised again.

Somerset, however, could not proceed thus without making enemies. It seemed to be the genius of the age that whoever would persevere with decision in

acting according to the principles of the Bible, must some time or other lay down his life for it.

He was accused of treason, but acquitted of the charge. The people, by whom he was greatly beloved, expressed their joy by loud acclamations. He was, however, condemned, without either proof or probability of guilt, for felony, and not long afterward executed. Many of the spectators came to the place of execution to dip their handkerchiefs in his blood, which they long preserved as a precious relic.

In 1553 Edward died, and Queen Mary came to the throne.

CHAPTER X.

REIGN OF QUEEN MARY.

It was a happy circumstance for England that Mary lived but a little over five years after her accession to the throne. During that time she did all she could to bring the nation back to Romanism. All the statutes of King Edward with regard to religion were repealed by one vote. Commissioners were appointed to go to Rome and negotiate with the pope for the giving up of the kingdom again to his supremacy. The pope haughtily insisted that the Church property which Henry VIII. had taken from the monasteries should be restored. The Parliament would not consent to this. Latin services were substituted for the English all over the nation.

Gardiner, Bonner, Tonstal, Day, Heath, and Vesey were restored to their sees; and Holgate, archbishop of York, Coverdale, bishop of Exeter, Ridley of London, Hooper of Gloucester, and Latimer, now in his

old age, were thrown into prison. All preachers were silenced, except such as should obtain a license; and at last, at the instigation of Gardiner, when the queen seemed to be securely seated on her throne, the fires of persecution were lighted.

Cranmer boldly and fearlessly opposed the new order of things, and published a statement asserting that it was the devil who was trying to restore the Latin masses. He affirmed that the mass itself had no foundation in Scripture, or in the practice of the primitive Church; but was, on the contrary, a plain contradiction to antiquity and the inspired writings, and was replete with many horrid blasphemies. He was rewarded for this fidelity to his principles by being charged as a conspirator, taking part with Lady Jane Grey; and thereupon he was convicted of high treason. His execution however was delayed; a more cruel punishment awaited him.

Queen Mary now filled the Tower and all the prisons with the nobility and gentry of the kingdom. And as she found herself becoming universally hated, she was stimulated to greater cruelty.

The first one called on to take up his cross was John Rogers, an aged, devoted, and talented minister of London. He had assisted Tindale and Coverdale in the translation of the Bible. Believing marriage lawful to a priest as well as to any other man, he had entered into that state, and was the father of ten children. Neither his anxiety as to the protection and support of his wife and children nor his fear of suffering could induce him to deny the principles which he had cherished. When brought before his judges he asserted that the pope was antichrist, and that his religion was contrary to the Gospel. He was condemned to be burned.

When the hour of his execution arrived, and they came to conduct him to the stake, such was his tranquillity and his firm trust in God that they found him in a sound sleep, and were obliged to awake him. On the way his wife and children approached, wishing to see him; but Gardiner told him he was a priest, and ought not to have a wife, and they were not permitted to come near him. He was chained to the stake, and burned to death.

Five days after John Hooper, bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, a man of great piety, and sixty years of age, was burned among the people to whom he had preached. The accusations against him were that he would not put away his wife, and that he did not believe that the wafer used in the communion contained the real and actual body and blood of Christ.

A pound of gunpowder was placed at his feet, and another pound under each arm, as a kind of mercy to hasten his end. He was placed upon a high bench, and bound to the stake by an iron hoop around his middle. But the wood was green, and kindled slowly, and the wind, which was high, drove the flame away from him, so that he was scorched only. Dry wood was brought, but in such small quantities that for a long time nothing but his lower extremities were consumed, and he cried out, in great agony: "For God's sake, good people, let me have more fire!" Not until the third fire did the gunpowder explode, and even this did not end his suffering. He still continued to pray, in a loud voice: "Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me!" At length his tongue became so swollen that he could not articulate, and one of his arms dropped off before he expired. After he had thus lingered in all the bitterness of a most cruel death, he bowed forward and died.

Bishops Ridley and Latimer were burned together. Latimer had been a zealous Roman Catholic in his early years, and, like Paul, a persecutor of Protestants; but as has been already related, he was led to Christ by the ingenious plan of Bilney to reach his heart by coming to confess. Ever since he had been a faithful witness of the truth. He was now about eighty years of age. Henry VIII. had raised him to be Bishop of Worcester; but on the passage of the six articles he had resigned his bishopric rather than countenance them. He was punished for this by being imprisoned all the rest of Henry's life. When Edward VI. came to the throne he was set at liberty, and resumed preaching, but refused to be bishop again. In the reign of Mary he was imprisoned again, and remained in confinement until the year 1555, when he was brought to the stake.

When the flames rose up around him he rubbed his hands in them and put them on his face, and soon expired, apparently without much pain; but before his death he made that remark to his fellow-sufferer which has since become so memorable: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out."

With Ridley it was different. The wood was so piled around him that the flame was choked, and he could be seen leaping up and down under the fagots, suffering the most excruciating pain, while his lower parts were burning, and crying again and again: "I cannot burn! I cannot burn!" One of the persons standing by pulled the wood away from the top, when the fire burned up freely, and then poor Ridley turned himself eagerly toward it, as far as his chains would permit, and the flames soon reached the gun-

When the hour of his execution arrived, the executioners came to conduct him to the stake, such was his tranquillity and his firm trust in God that they found him in a sound sleep, and were obliged to wake him. On the way his wife and children, the Bloody Queen, wishing to see him; but Gardiner, a man of great barbarity and a priest, and ought not to have a priest, and ought not to have a not permitted to come near him. He was ten years of age, the stake, and burned to death.

Five days after John Hooper, a man of great influence to obtain of age, was burned among the heretic practices, was preached. The accusation would not put away his wife, and nothing for her lieve that the wafer used tained the real and actual

A pound of gunpowder, another pound under the vest, so was Cranmer; hasten his end. He was and bound to the stake in the middle. But the wood, and the wind, and the wind, and the wind, away from him, so the wood was brought for a long time before the Church. Cranmer gave secret orders that "For God's sake, be immediately led to the fire!" Not until exploded, and even the Church, and went into the still continued. The recantation which they have mercy upon him, he repented above all other came so sweetly to his heart, signed the papers; and he of his arms and hands, as he formerly believed; "and," had thus laid his hands, as farasmuch as my hand death, he laid his hands to my heart, my hand

wished therefor, for, may I come to
first burned."

At this they pulled him down from
the cross, and him away to the stake. As soon
as he was come to burn he stretched forth his right
hand, and thrust his hand into the flame, and held it
till it was consumed, crying, "This unworthy
hand! This unworthy hand!" Thus died one of the
most amiable of men. He was one of the
instruments, by the providence of God, in
establishing many of those reforms in England of
which we are now enjoying the benefit.

During all these scenes of suffering, Queen Mary
exhorted her bloodthirsty agents to continue their
pious labors. Thank God! she died in the year 1558,
and Elizabeth came to the throne. The daughter of
Anne Boleyn, and Protestant in her views, she re-
stored the principles of Edward VI., and for forty-five
years labored to promote the cause of true religion.
The doctrines of the Reformers became now so firmly
planted in the English nation that Romanism has
never been able to resume its sway.

CHAPTER XI.

TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

It was the dissemination of the word of God by
the press, by the voice of the preacher, and by the
lips of private Christians as they spoke one to another,
that led to this triumph of the Reformation in England.
We will make some further reference to the transla-
tions of the Bible into the English language.

Some of the Psalms were translated by King Alfred, in Saxon, about the year 900, and possibly a few other fragments; and the whole Gospel of John was translated by the venerable Bede into the same language about the commencement of the eighth century. But the first translation into the English language of the whole Bible was made by John Wyclif about the year 1360. No more of this than the New Testament has ever been printed, though manuscript copies of the whole remain in public libraries.

The first printed Bible in our language was that translated by Tindale, assisted by Miles Coverdale. The New Testament was published, not in England, but on the continent in the year 1526; and nearly all the copies, as has been previously stated, were bought up and burned by Bishop Tonstal and Sir Thomas More. Thus furnished with money to bring out a new edition, they published it again in the year 1530, and the whole Bible in the year 1532. This was also printed on the continent, and conveyed by stealth to England. Tindale had hardly finished his work when he went to his reward, for he was taken up and burned in Flanders. Coverdale and John Rogers prepared a new edition, in which the Apocrypha was translated, and prefaces and notes added from Luther's Bible. This was printed in 1537, and dedicated to Henry VIII., under the borrowed name of Thomas Matthews, whence this has usually been called Matthews's Bible, though it was still Tindale's version. It was printed at Hamburgh, but a license was now obtained for publishing it in England by the means of Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Latimer.

The first Bible then printed in England was Tindale's translation, revised and amended by Coverdale,

and again examined by Cranmer, who wrote a preface for it, from which it was called Cranmer's Bible. It was printed in 1540, and by a royal proclamation every parish was obliged to have a copy in its church, under a penalty of forty shillings a month. Yet two years after it was suppressed by the inconstant Henry VIII., under the influence of the popish bishops. It was restored under Edward VI., and again suppressed under Mary, and restored again under Elizabeth, and a new edition brought out in the year 1562.

The next English translation after Tindale's was made in Geneva by Coverdale, Goodman, Gilbie, Sampson, Cole, Wittingham, and Knox, who were exiled by Queen Mary. The New Testament was printed in 1557, the Old in 1560. This was called the Geneva Bible, and was highly esteemed by the Puritans.

The next was called the Great English Bible, more commonly the Bishop's Bible. Archbishop Parker, resolving on a new translation for the public use of the Church, appointed the bishops and other learned men to take each a share to translate. It was published in 1568 in large folio, and again in 1589 in octavo. It was publicly used in the churches for forty years; but the Geneva Bible was read more in private, being frequently reprinted during that time.

The Roman Catholics, now finding it impossible to keep the Scriptures from the people, caused a version of their own to be made of the New Testament, as favorable as possible to their doctrines, which was published at Rheims in 1584, and called the Rhemish Bible, or Rhemish translation. About thirty years afterward the Old Testament was translated by them, and published at Douay in 1609 and 1610. It was translated from the Latin Vulgate, and is now known as the Douay Bible.

The next was that which we now use. It originated in the Hampton Court Conference in 1603, where, objections having been made to the Bishops' Bible, King James gave orders for a new English translation. Fifty-four learned men were appointed to perform this work by the king, as appears by his letter to the archbishop, dated 1604. Seven of them were probably either dead or had declined the task, before the work was commenced, as Fuller's list of the translators makes but forty-seven, who, being ranged under six divisions, entered on their labor in 1607. In executing their important work they divided it among them, assigning to each one that part of the Bible which he was most competent to translate; and then they met together, and one read the translation while the rest held in their hands some Bible, either of the learned tongues or French, Spanish, Italian, etc. If they found any fault they spoke; if not, he read on. It was published in the year 1611, and is commonly called King James's Bible. After this all the other versions fell into disuse, except the Epistles, Gospels, and Psalms in the Common Prayer Book of the English and American Episcopal Churches. These were continued according to the Bishops' translation until the change of the liturgy in the year 1661, when King James's translation was adopted in the epistles and gospels; but the Psalms in the Prayer Book remain as in the old version to the present day.

Much has been truly said of the merits of our present version. It probably comes nearer the original than any translation in the world, and no human estimate can be made of the good it has done wherever the English language is spoken.

THE
REFORMATION IN IRELAND.



THE
REFORMATION IN IRELAND.

THIS beautiful island, famed for the hospitality and warm hearts of its inhabitants, has a religious history full of stirring incident. Long centuries ago the smoke of human sacrifices went up from its hills, and groves, and altars, while the shrieks of the expiring victims were as incense to the ferocious worshipers.

About the year 400 the celebrated St. Patrick was born in Scotland, from whence his parents removed to France. While residing there, and when about sixteen years of age, he was carried captive by pirates to Ireland. In a strange land he remembered the pious instructions of a truly Christian father and mother; instructions which he had been too much inclined to neglect when he lived peacefully at home. While a slave, and keeping swine in the fields alone, he lifted his heart to God, and received the joyful witness of his adoption by the Saviour. He describes himself the change which took place in him as follows: "I was sixteen years old, and knew not the true God; but in that strange land the Lord opened my unbelieving eyes, and, although late, I called my sins to mind, and was converted with my whole heart to the Lord my God, who regarded my low estate, had pity on my youth and ignorance, and consoled me as a father does his children."

Again he says: "The love of God increased more and more in me, with faith and the fear of his name. And even before the light of day in the forests and on the mountains, where I remained in the rain and snow and frost, I was impelled to pray by the Spirit of God which burned within me."*

Rescued from his pagan bondage, his mind turned back to the land where God had spoken to his soul. Night and day his mind was filled with the desire to go and tell these heathens of the Saviour he had found. Long he tarried, but at last was ready to leave country, home, and friends for Christ's sake. And he went and preached to them the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not the ceremonies of the Church of Rome. St. Patrick was not a Romanist, but a Christian.

After an absence of over a quarter of a century, and when he was about forty-five years of age, he landed in Ulster with some companions, whom he had brought with him as missionaries. From their foreign appearance the people took them to be pirates, and prepared to drive them back. St. Patrick, who had not forgotten the language he had learned when a slave, told them his errand, and they were eventually conducted to the halls of Tara, where king and people listened with intense interest to the story of the cross. Soon their idols and idol-worship were thrown aside, and thousands embraced Christianity. Everywhere St. Patrick went through the island, collecting the people together in the fields by the sound of a drum, and in their own tongue preaching to them a crucified Saviour. It was thus that Ireland was brought from the darkness of paganism to the light of the Gospel.

* Translated from Patr. Confess., Usser. 432.

That St. Patrick was no Romanist Archbishop Usher has proved. He certainly did not believe in purgatory as strongly as some who have come after him, for there is no mention whatever made of it in the writings ascribed to him. His successors, however, have fully atoned for St. Patrick's unbelief, as they have asserted that the very place itself was to be found in Ireland.

Cesarius, a German monk, advises all who doubt to go to Ireland, to St. Patrick's purgatory, in Loghdergi, and he shall be convinced.* Dr. Tyrry, quoted by the same author, says it is famous all over Europe; and O'Sullivan, in his Catholic History of Ireland, has given us a description of the rooms and furniture, and the several sorts of punishment, and the way to get in and safely to get out. But our historian says that the purgatory here ascribed to St. Patrick was dug up, by order of the Lords Justices of Ireland, in the year 1636, and was found to be only a small cave.

Neither did St. Patrick believe in the celibacy of the priests; for in one of the synods held by him it was ordered that the wives of the clergy should not walk abroad with uncovered heads, which shows that the clergy had wives.†

But the purity of St. Patrick's doctrines, long after his death, became so corrupted by the importation of errors from Rome, that, had the saint landed again in Ulster, though he might not have found the snakes he was said to have expelled, he would hardly have recognized the Church which he took so much pains to plant.

* *Hibernia Anglicana*; or, the History of Ireland from the Conquest thereof by the English to the Present Time. By Richard Cox, Esq. Published in London in the year 1689.

† *Hibernia Anglicana*.

Centuries after the Christian religion had been thus introduced the Northmen began to send their fierce warriors into the island. They burned the churches, and plundered the inhabitants. At last they planted a colony in Armagh, and about the year 815 Turgesius, the Norwegian, assumed the title of King of Ireland. He subjected the native kings to his sway, and through them collected a tax from the people, called nose money, because he enforced the payment of it by cutting off the noses of those who were defaulters.

O'Malachlin, an Irish chief, delivered his country from the tyrant.

Next the Danes came pouring down upon the ill-fated land, under their famous sea-kings. The celebrated Brian Borohme took the field against them in the year 1000. Battle after battle was fought, and when the old warrior was eighty years of age he was still in the field. With whitened hair he rode from rank to rank, a crucifix in one hand and his trusty sword in the other, calling on them to follow where he should lead.

The Danes were defeated, and either fled from the country or were incorporated with the inhabitants.

We pass to the time when the trumpet of Luther was giving no uncertain note on the continent of Europe. Henry VIII. of England had thrown off his allegiance to the pope, and was making endeavors to conciliate the Irish chieftains, so as to introduce among them his own views. O'Donnel, for instance, was created Earl of Tyrconnel; O'Neil Earl of Tyrone, and O'Neil's son was honored with the title of Lord Duncannon. The latter might have been very powerful among his followers, and very expert in rallying his forces to the wild Irish warfare, yet he

was so poor that he had not the means to go to London to receive his new honor from the hands of the king, but was obliged to borrow a hundred pounds from the English governor, and with so little prospect of returning it in hard cash that he stipulated to be allowed to repay it in cattle.

Men began to be thoroughly waked up now to the subjects which had for years agitated England, Germany, and other parts of the continent. The writings of Luther, Erasmus, and Melancthon had reached, and been read and studied, in Ireland. One man seemed destined to become its Luther. We refer to George Browne, who was consecrated Archbishop of Dublin in the year 1535. To him, with others, the king of England committed the charge of reforming the island.

The archbishop, in pursuance of this trust, caused all the relics and images to be removed out of the two cathedrals in Dublin, and from all the churches in his diocese; and put up in their place the Lord's Prayer, the creed, and the ten commandments. He urged the ecclesiastics throughout the country to throw off the allegiance of Rome, saying that even the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in ancient times used to acknowledge kings and emperors to be supreme in their own dominions.

He was violently opposed by the Archbishop of Armagh, and by the pope, who sent over a bull of excommunication against all who had or should own the king of England's supremacy within the Irish nation; denouncing a curse on all of them and theirs who should not within forty days acknowledge to their confessors their sin.

On the other hand, the Parliament in Dublin passed such acts as follow:

“An act against the pope, to suppress his usurpations, and that it shall be premunire to defend or assert his usurped authority.”

“The act of faculties prohibiting the subjects from paying any pensions, cences, portions, Peterpence, or any other impositions to the use of the pope, and extinguishing and suppressing them for ever.”

And to prevent the monks and priests from distinguishing themselves from the people in public, it was enacted: “That no subject shall be shaved above the ears, or wear *glibbs*, or *crommealls* ;” (that is, hair on the upper lip.)

These statutes were passed between the years 1535 and 1538. In the year 1541 a law was enacted, by which theatrical representations and plays were forbidden on Christmas and Easter, which shows how these sacred days had been kept.

The Irish generally could not read the Bible, and if they could, they had not many Bibles to read. They, therefore, had no appeal from the authority of the priests. Mother Church was the gospel to them; and to be cursed by the Church was the direst of all calamities. All was commotion, therefore, when the pope’s bull arrived and became generally known. And the friends of true religion, instead of printing, and circulating, and preaching the Scriptures, as had been done in Scotland, spent their time in contending about the king’s supremacy and the pope’s rights. Thus they lost ground.

As for the priests, they did not know even the first principles of religion. Browne complained bitterly of them, saying that a bird might be taught to speak with as much sense as many of the clergy; but that they were crafty to cozen the poor common people.

The pope also did his part. He not only inflamed

the religious bigotry of the people, but appealed to their love of the Church at large. One Thady O'Brien was seized, on whom was found a letter directed to Shan O'Neil, sent from Rome, and dated May, 1538. In this letter were the following words:

“ His Holiness Paul, now Pope, and the Council of the Fathers, have lately found in Rome a prophecy of one Luciferianus, an Irish bishop of Cashel, in which he saith that the Mother Church of Rome falleth when, in Ireland, the Catholic faith is overcome. Therefore, for the glory of the Mother Church, the honor of St. Peter, and your own secureness, suppress heresy and his holiness's enemies.”

In the year 1541 the Archbishop of Armagh, Robert Wachop, (who was famous for riding post best of anybody in Christendom, although he was blind from his cradle, so says an ancient chronicler,) introduced the Jesuits into Ireland, by the favor and countenance of Pope Paul III.

After the accession of Edward VI. to the throne of England in the year 1547, an order was issued that the English liturgy be used in Ireland; and for the abolition of monasteries and nunneries, as being the nurseries only of vice or luxury.

The priests contrived a plan, and put it in execution the second time the liturgy was used, which was as effectual as any other could have been with the superstitious people to make them hate the service. In Dublin, among the images spared, was a marble one of our Saviour holding a reed in his hand, with a crown of thorns on his head. While the minister was reading drops of red liquid, which looked like blood, were seen coming through the crevices of the crown and trickling down the face of the image. All at once the contrivers of the trick started up and

cried aloud: "See how our Saviour's image sweats blood! But it must necessarily do this, since heresy is come into the Church!"

The people were terrified at what seemed to them a miracle, and an evident mark of the divine displeasure, and hastened from the Church more than ever convinced that the doctrines of Protestantism were from the devil. The priests remained to laugh over the success of their contrivance.

All through the reign of Edward the Reformation made but dubious progress in Ireland. In the year 1553 Queen Mary came to the throne, who was, as is well known, a furious Roman Catholic. As she had done in England, she determined to destroy the reformers in Ireland by fire and sword. She appointed Dr. Cole, an agent of the blood-thirsty Bishop Bonner, to carry her designs into execution. He set out in his journey, and arrived at Chester with his commission. There the mayor of the city, who was a Roman Catholic, called on him. Dr. Cole took out of his traveling bag a leather case, and said to the mayor: "Here is a commission that shall lash the heretics of Ireland."

The woman who kept the house where they were talking was a Mrs. Edmunds, a Protestant, and overheard this remark. She knew what it meant, and having a brother in Dublin who was a Protestant too, who might be one of the first victims, she was greatly troubled. A sudden thought struck her, and she immediately determined that she would send off Dr. Cole without his thunder if she could. So while the mayor was taking his leave, and the doctor politely accompanying him down stairs, and paying to him the honors due to his station at the door, Mrs. Edmunds was opening the leather case, and having

found the commission, she took it out, and in its stead placed a sheet of paper with a pack of cards, having the knave of clubs at the top. She closed up the case before the doctor returned, and left it just as it had been lying when he went out. He took it up, put it in his traveling bag, and prepared for his voyage. Having embarked, he arrived at Dublin in the year 1558. There, anxious to fulfill his pious work of burning the heretics, he proceeded to the castle of Lord Fitzwalter, the viceroy, taking his leather case with him.

At a suitable time the privy council was assembled. Dr. Cole was brought in, and made a speech, relating upon what account he came over. He then presented the leather box to the lord-deputy, who opened it that the secretary might read the commission. Raising the lid the knave of clubs met his astonished view ! and as the cards were taken out, there was no commission to be found. Dr. Cole insisted that he had a commission, and searched the box himself; but there was nothing but the cards. He expressed his mortification to the viceroy and the persons present; but Lord Fitzwalter did not seem to take it much to heart, for he replied :

“ We must procure another commission, and in the mean time let us shuffle the cards.”

Dr. Cole set about returning to England immediately, to get fresh authority; but not having the advantages of steam in those days, he was obliged to wait for a favorable wind. While thus tarrying news arrived that Queen Mary was dead, and the Protestants escaped the lashing that was intended for them. Queen Elizabeth afterward granted Mrs. Edmunds an annuity of forty pounds a year for this humane act.

During the reign of Elizabeth the inhabitants of Ireland were kept in a state of continual ferment by their priests. They assured their deluded followers that it was not only right to kill, but that they obtained the approbation of God by slaughtering the Protestants; and that all Roman Catholics who were killed in this pious and charitable work would be immediately received into everlasting happiness, without passing through purgatory. Terms so easy were eagerly embraced, and multitudes of the zealous members of holy Mother Church thus purchased for themselves a place in heaven, and even went straight there from some midnight assassination scene, their hands red with Protestant blood! That is, if what their priests told them was true.

Thus rebellion and violence continually prevailed. It is true the English governors were sometimes oppressive; but the Irish inhabitants were so constantly engaged in some act of bloodshed that they dared not be lenient.

In the year 1602, when the sagacious and stern Lord Mountjoy was appointed lord-lieutenant, there began to be a change. The popish mode of buying themselves off, which the Irish chiefs had pursued, when they committed crimes, was broken up. The manner in which this was practiced may be imagined by the following incident. One of the lord-deputies had told the unruly M'Guire that he was about to send the sheriff into Fermanagh. M'Guire replied: "Your sheriff shall be welcome; but let me know beforehand what a sheriff's head is rated at, that I may be prepared to levy the amount upon the county, if my people chance to cut his head off."

Lord Mountjoy reduced such men to a state of obe-

dience, and the country began to enjoy comparative tranquillity.

During the reign of James I., who came to the throne of England in the year 1603, great advances were made in the social state of Ireland as well as in the progress of true religion.

The immense tracts of land which civil war and rebellion had depopulated were colonized by industrious English subjects, who emigrated from England under the auspices of the Royal Irish Society, which had been incorporated by James. The example of civilized and enlightened men, and such were those who went from England, would naturally have a good effect upon the turbulent native people. The king then declared all the people of Ireland to be equally his subjects, and stationed a small standing army in Ireland, which was to be regularly paid from England, thus freeing the inhabitants from all the burden of supporting the soldiers. Regular circuits for the administration of justice were also formed, and Ireland was fast growing in prosperity and civilization. We are much disposed to agree with Sir John Davies, as quoted by Hume, that "James in nine years made greater advances toward the civilization of Ireland than had been made in the four hundred and forty years which had elapsed since the conquest was first attempted." But after all that was done we do not read that the Bible was much circulated among the people.

This state of affairs went on, to some extent, from 1603 to 1641, and if Brian Borohme, that ancient and true friend of Ireland, could have seen the alterations which had been wrought in his native country, he would have denounced to death the traitor who, for selfish motives, could light up the flames of war.

The year 1641 is known in Irish history as the era of that bloody massacre which so much resembled the day of St. Bartholomew in France.

Under the leadership of such men as Roger Moore, the Lord M'Guire, and Sir Phelim O'Neill, who has been called "the black-hearted," and "the author of the worst atrocities of the rebellion," and who rivaled Nero in his cruelty, it was arranged that on the night of the 23d day of October, 1641, the Irish should rise and murder every Protestant in the island.*

With wonderful secrecy their plans remained undiscovered, while arms and ammunition were distributed all over the kingdom. To lull the suspicions of their victims, the Roman Catholics showed every kindness to their Protestant neighbors, and never before had they seemed so desirous of living in peace and good-will.

The 22d of October arrived, only one day before the general rising; Moore and M'Guire were in Dublin awaiting anxiously the appointed hour; a host of disguised followers were watching them, anxious for the signal to crimson their hands with blood; not a doubt or fear seemed to disturb the whole city; when a man by the name of O'Conelly, one of the conspirators, conscience-stricken at the thought of murdering so many innocent people, disclosed the plot.

Dublin was immediately aroused. Officers were sent from street to street to warn the Protestants to arm and prepare for a death struggle. It was just in

* Three years before, the Scotch, without violence, without bloodshed, had signed a solemn covenant to serve God, and this covenant had gone from one end of their country to the other, and by this covenant they had maintained their religious liberty. The Irishman covenants with his fellows that in the dark hour of night he will butcher every one not a papist like himself. Can anything better than this show the difference which then existed between the people?

time to save the castle and the city. But no human power could reach the rest of the island. There was no steam car to rush on its errand of mercy, carrying warning and weapons of defense to the ill-fated Protestants ; no telegraph to flash from one end of the island to the other the tidings of their doom. O'Neill and the other leaders all through the country were true to their time and their bloody purpose. Men, women, and children were without distinction put to death. No former kindness, no present connections were allowed to save any one who was guilty of being an Englishman and a Protestant. "Never in the world's history," says one, "was massacre more unrelentingly carried on." The time of year had been chosen on account of the darkness of the nights, and full well did they employ the darkness to complete their horrible butchery. Friends who had lived in the same house with the murderers, neighbors who had exchanged kind words with them the day before, near relations who had been seated at the same table, were slaughtered with horrible imprecations. And everywhere the terrible work was conducted with the most inhuman cruelty. "Some," says Fox, "were laid with the center of their backs on the axletree of a carriage, with their legs resting on the ground on one side and their arms and head on the other. In this position one of the savages scourged the wretched object, while another set on furious dogs, who tore to pieces the arms and upper parts of the body ; and in this dreadful manner they were deprived of their existence.

"Great numbers were fastened to horses' tails, and the beasts being set at full gallop by the riders, the wretched victims were dragged along till they expired."

Women of all ages were slain with the most savage ferocity. Young and innocent children were thrown to dogs and swine. And these scenes took place, not in one city, but everywhere.

At Portendown bridge one hundred and fifteen men, women, and children were drowned.

In Killoman forty-eight families were massacred.

In Killmore two hundred families.

In Kilkenny not one Protestant escaped.

In some places they plucked out their eyes and cut off their hands, and turned them into the fields to die. In Tyrone three hundred were drowned. At the river Bann one thousand; and so all over Ireland.

The number thus murdered was estimated at one hundred and fifty thousand.

For years Ireland was now filled with civil war, until Cromwell and Ireton restored it to comparative tranquillity.

We have thus briefly seen some of the events passing in Ireland during and subsequent to the time of the great Reformation. The reason why greater progress was not made in elevating the Papist population was the want of systematic, and continued, and extensive circulation of the Scriptures in their own language, and the want of primary and popular schools in which the children might get a sufficient education to enable them to read the Bible for themselves. The friends of Ireland are devoting themselves to this work now, and the time seems fast approaching when Hibernia's hills and vales, her rugged shores, and mountain slopes shall be blessed with the pure light of the Gospel.

THE
REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND.



THE
REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND.

PATRICK HAMILTON, Abbot of Ferme, has been called the first Scotch Reformer. When only twenty-three he visited the continent of Europe, and there met with Luther and Melancthon, by whom he was instructed in the doctrines of the Gospel. While yet young he was brought to trial for differing in opinion from the Church of Rome, was condemned to the flames, and the same day burned. This was in February, 1527, and the cruel spectacle, instead of checking the so-called heresy, served to advance it. One of the Romanists said: "The smoke of Mr. Patrick Hamilton infected as many as it blew upon."

From 1530 to 1540 ten persons suffered death for confessing Hamilton's sentiments. And in the mean time the numbers who turned from Romanism wonderfully grew; among them were the Earls of Glencairn and Errol, the Lords Ruthven and Kilmaurs, Sir David Lindsay, and Sir James Sandilands.

In the year 1546 George Wishart, a priest, was brought to the stake. After his conversion, instead of preaching the ceremonies of the Church, like the rest of the clergy, he began to proclaim the Gospel with such power that it attracted the attention of Cardinal Beaton. After some delay, the cardinal succeeded in arresting him, and confined him in the

Castle of St. Andrews. Articles of accusation were brought against him some of which were as follows:

“That Wishart despised the holy mother Church and deceived the people.

“That he ridiculed the mass.

“That he preached against seven sacraments.

“That he denied transubstantiation and the necessity of extreme unction.

“That he would not admit the authority of the pope.

“That he condemned prayers to the saints.

“That he allowed the eating of flesh on Friday.

“That it was lawful for priests to marry.”

For such heresies he was brought to trial, where a priest by the name of Lauder appeared as one of his accusers. The manner in which the trial was conducted may be imagined when we learn that Lauder was allowed to call him every barbarous name, such as “renegade, false heretic, traitor, and thief,” and finally to spit in his face.

When this mockery of a trial was finished, sentence of death was pronounced, to take place on the following day.

The next morning two friars from the cardinal came to him; one of whom put on him a black linen coat, the other brought several bags of gunpowder, which they tied about different parts of his body. His hands were then tied behind him, and he was conducted to the fatal spot. On the way some friars urged him to pray to the Virgin Mary. He replied:

“Cease; tempt me not, I entreat you.”

Having arrived at the stake, the executioner put a rope around his neck, and a chain about his waist, upon which he fell on his knees and exclaimed:

“O thou Saviour of the world, have mercy upon

me. Father of heaven, I commend my spirit into thy holy hands."

He then addressed the spectators thus:

"Christian brethren and sisters, I beseech you be not offended at the word of God, for the torments which you see prepared for me; but I exhort you that ye love the word of God for your salvation, and suffer patiently and with a comfortable heart for the word's sake, which is your undoubted salvation and everlasting comfort. I pray you also show my brethren and sisters, who have often heard me, that they cease not to learn the word of God, which I taught them according to the measure of grace given me, but to hold fast to it with the strictest attention; and show them that the doctrine was no old wives' fables, but the truth of God. For if I had taught men's doctrine I should have had greater thanks from men. But for the word of God's sake I now suffer, not sorrowfully, but with a glad heart and mind. For this cause I was sent, that I should suffer this fire for Christ's sake. Behold my face; you shall not see me change my countenance. I fear not the fire, and if persecution come to you for the word's sake, I pray you fear not them that can kill the body and have no power to hurt the soul."

After this he prayed for his accusers, saying:

"I beseech thee, Father of heaven, forgive them that have, from ignorance or an evil mind, forged lies of me. I forgive them with all my heart. I beseech Christ to forgive them that have ignorantly condemned me."

Again he spoke to the spectators as the solemn moment approached:

"I beseech you, brethren, exhort your prelates to learn the word of God, that they may be ashamed to

do evil and learn to do good; or there will come upon them the wrath of God, which they shall not eschew."

The executioner then fell upon his knees before him and said: "Sir, I pray you forgive me, for I am not the cause of your death."

Wishart took the man by the hand and kissed him.

He was fastened to the stake, the fagots lighted, and the gunpowder soon exploded. The martyr still lived however, burned as he was by the powder and surrounded by the flames. The governor of the castle, who stood so near that he was singed by the flames, exhorted him to be of good cheer, to which he replied:

"This flame occasions trouble to my body, indeed, but it hath in no wise broken my spirit. But he who now so proudly looks down upon me from yonder lofty place," and he raised his arm, from which the fire had burned the cords, and pointed to Cardinal Beaton, "shall ere long be as ignominiously thrown down as now he proudly lolls at his ease."

In about an hour his body was totally consumed.

Retribution was not long delayed. Cardinal Beaton had arrived at the summit of his ambition. Without being Regent of Scotland, he enjoyed all the authority and power. He resided in the castle of St. Andrews, which he had strongly fortified, and rendered, according to all human calculations, impregnable. A numerous array of soldiers were his body guard, the town entirely devoted to him, and all the neighboring country filled with his people. He felt that he was safe.

Norman Leslie, eldest son of the Duke of Rothes, whom the cardinal had contemptuously and unjustly treated, undertook to slay him in the midst of his citadel. Early in the morning of the 20th of May,

1546, with fifteen men only, he entered by one of the gates of the castle, which had been opened for workmen who were finishing the fortifications. Placing some of his men at the door of the cardinal's apartment, he woke up his servants one by one, and turned them out of the castle. Quietly then entering his room, he slew him. No one else was injured.

However unjustifiable this act may have been, it delivered Scotland from a man whose pride was intolerable, and whose power, cruelty, and cunning were great checks to the Reformation. The death of Beaton was a fatal blow to the Roman Catholic religion in Scotland.

About this time the celebrated John Knox began to proclaim publicly the doctrines of the Reformation. He was born in the year 1505, at Gifford. When he was about thirty years of age he began to see fully the errors of Rome; but did not acknowledge himself publicly as a Protestant until he was thirty-seven. He was a man who has been called the intrepid reformer; one of whom the Regent of Scotland said at his grave: "There lies he who never feared the face of man." His popular eloquence and personal courage effected much for the Reformation in Scotland.

Now Parliament passed a law by which the people were allowed to read the Bible in their own language, an act which perhaps more than anything else contributed to the overthrow of Romanism. Lord Maxwell was the principal mover in this measure. From this time copies of the Bible were imported from England in great numbers, and books were multiplied in every direction, tending to show the pride and superstition of the Romish clergy.

The principles of the Reformation from this time
Hist. Reformation.

spread with great rapidity. Everywhere men, women, and children might be seen studying the Bible. Both the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland were filled with Bible readers. They forgot their ordinary pursuits, they forgot their accustomed pleasures, in their ardor to learn the truths of the word of God. Men who had not sufficient education to read it themselves gathered round those who could. Controversial questions were suggested, and instead of spending their time in fierce debate, though this was not always wanting, they searched the Scriptures. Having read them once through, it seemed only to whet their appetite to begin again. And what made the Scriptures especially dear to them was, that it was for them Hamilton, and Wishart, and their countrymen had died. The truths they were quietly reading in their fields and hamlets had supported *them* in the flames, and it might be they would be called upon to die for the same doctrines.

Bloody Queen Mary of England came to the throne in the year 1553. Her bigotry and zeal to establish again the papal power in England hastened its overthrow in Scotland. The persecuted Protestants fled to the latter country, and filled the whole kingdom with horror at the cruelties of the Roman Catholics.

Mary died in the year 1558, and was succeeded by Elizabeth, who so long and so successfully defended the Protestant cause.

In the year 1559 Mary of Guise, who was Regent of Scotland, issued a proclamation commanding all persons to observe the approaching Easter according to the Romish ritual. But the Scotch had learned too much of the Bible to obey. The Earl of Glencairn and Sir Hugh Campbell were sent to expostulate with her. Her answer was in substance as

follows: "I am resolved to extirpate the Reformed heresy from Scotland."

To carry out this resolution she summoned, on the 10th of May, all the Protestant preachers to appear before her at Sterling.

The people assembled in great multitudes, determined to defend their pastors. The regent, seeing their numbers, promised to stop the trial, and the people dispersed. But after this was accomplished, and the 10th of May had arrived, she pronounced the ministers to be outlaws.

Little was gained by this over the sturdy Scotsmen. They were determined to stand by their ministers. Just at this time John Knox arrived, and immediately preached with great vehemence against image-worship. A monk, who had heard the news, rushed to the assembled priests, exclaiming, "John Knox, John Knox is come! He is here! He slept last night in Edinburgh!"

They were filled with dismay, for they knew the character of the man. The Reformers again gave the signal for rallying, and they were determined now to show their Roman Catholic rulers that they were in earnest. In Perth they broke the images to pieces; they tore the pictures, and almost leveled the monasteries to the ground. It is said that John Knox cried out, "Pull down the nests, and the rooks will fly off!"

They marched from town to town, and everywhere the gates were thrown open to receive them. On June 29, 1559, without striking a blow they took possession of Edinburgh. This shows what a hold the Reformation must have already taken on the hearts of the people. The cause of it was that the Bible had been thoroughly distributed among them.

To cement their league more effectually the Prot-

estant leaders, among whom were Argyle, Morton, Glencairn, Lord Lorne, and Erskine, of Dun, sub-scribed a bond, and called themselves the Congregation of the Lord.

At Leith they met with a check. There was a French garrison in that place, and the intrepid Scotchmen could not take it. They applied to Queen Elizabeth of England for help; and in January, 1560, an English fleet arrived, bringing an army of six thousand soldiers, and two thousand horsemen. To meet their allies the forces of the Reformers assembled from all parts of the kingdom, and the combined army, amounting to thirteen thousand men, besieged Leith. The garrison was soon reduced, the queen-regent herself retired to the castle of Edinburgh, where she died, and the leaders of the Congregation, being now masters of the kingdom, went on to complete the work of the Reformation.

A Parliament was convened, and it was found that the Protestant members greatly outnumbered the Romanist. Several acts were passed by this Parliament having reference to the religious state of the country. By such acts Protestantism was established, and the Presbyterian form of Church government adopted nearly as it exists at present.

Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, afterward endeavored to restore Romanism, but without success. Her own downfall and flight left the kingdom to the Earl of Murray, who has been called the "Good Regent," whose courage, military skill, and wisdom confirmed more fully the Reformed religion among the people. Romanism was defeated forever in Scotland, but there was another struggle for the brave men who had achieved this first victory.

James VI., after a reign of several years in Scot-

land, succeeded Elizabeth on the throne of England in the year 1603, and thus became James I. of England. Bent on uniting the religious worship of both countries, he introduced, as far as he was able, among the Scotch the Episcopal form of Church government. The Scotch had no taste either for episcopacy or the forms of prayer contained in the Prayer Book. John Knox and their favorite leaders were Presbyterians, and anything else was to them about the same as Popery, which they abhorred. However, they were not able to resist the king. Pious ministers were thrown out of their places and cast into prison. Profigate hirelings were appointed to preach to the people, and soon the effects became visible. Throughout the villages and cities vice and immorality of all kinds increased rapidly. The Sabbath was neglected, and the nation seemed fast tending to a state as bad as previous to the Reformation. But in the Scottish highlands, and in the obscure vales and hamlets were devoted men ready to give their lives for Christ and their Church. And in the cities too, amid the desecration of the Sabbath by public amusements, processions, noise, plays, and music, were men who met quietly in some upper room or secluded spot to worship God. If they could find a minister out of prison to preach to them, he preached, but in a low and subdued voice to prevent discovery. If there was no minister they read the Bible, and preached to each other and prayed; but they dared not raise the shout of praise, and hardly dared to pray in a voice that could be heard outside, lest they should be dispersed by soldiers or cast into prison.

They could hear the revelry without, the shouts of the wicked, the uproar of mirth sometimes, and sometimes of anger, and sad sounds they were to men

praying on the Lord's day ; but they prayed on, that God would bring to them a better time. No wonder the Scotchman now loves his Sabbath. No wonder that many a long mile he will go to assemble in his "*kirk*" with his brethren. His ancestors bought both of these for him by many a struggle.

Year after year thus they prayed in secret, and thus they met and talked to each other of the love of Christ, and the leaven kept spreading until God heard the supplications of his people.

Charles I. came to the throne of England and Scotland in the year 1625.

In the year 1633 he visited his Scottish dominions, where he was received with affection and joy. He met the love of the people by ordering a new liturgy to be introduced into their national Church ; a liturgy which was extremely obnoxious to them, by its approaching more to the forms of popery than even the English. On Sunday, July 23, this measure was to be carried into effect throughout the nation. The day arrived, and the various churches assembled. The dean of Edinburgh was to officiate in St. Giles, and when the congregation met, to give importance to the service he was attended by judges, prelates, and councilmen. The congregation came together as usual. Nothing took place indicating the disposition of the people until the service commenced. An old woman, filled with indignation, then started up, and, exclaiming loudly against what she called the mass, threw the stool on which she had been sitting at the preacher's head. The service was interrupted by a wild uproar, in which the people made a rush for the altar, and tried to get the preacher into their hands. The magistrates however restored order, and turned *the most turbulent* out of the church, locked the doors,

and began the service again. But the people gathered around the church in great numbers, broke the windows, burst open the doors, and rent the air with exclamations of "A pope! an antichrist! stone him! stone him!"

All throughout Scotland the bishops and episcopal ministers met with about the same success in imposing the liturgy on the congregations.

The people were now thoroughly aroused, and as if by one impulse they made a desperate effort to secure their religious freedom.

They had not forgotten the old covenant which their ancestors had signed against popery, and they now determined to renew it against prelacy. A day of fasting and prayer was proclaimed, and on the 28th day of February, 1638, a great crowd filled the church of Gray Friars in Edinburgh, while sixty thousand Presbyterians assembled in the burial ground.

The parchment was unrolled in the church. Prayer was made to God for success in their perilous undertaking. Then after some necessary explanations, there was a silence deep and deathlike.

An old man came forward. His countenance betrayed great feeling, and his hand trembled as he took the pen. He signed the covenant. He was the Earl of Sunderland, whose influence and possessions were perhaps equal to those of any other Scottish noble.

Others now came forward, until all within the church had signed. Carried outside and placed on a tombstone, the people gathered round it. Then the pent-up feelings, which had been choked and smothered in those secret prayer-meetings, broke out. Some wept, some sobbed, some shouted, some added after their names "till death," and others, opening a vein, wrote their names with their blood.

After the work was completed, and the feelings of the people had subsided, the vast assemblage quietly separated and went to their homes.

The next day it was carried to other places, crowds accompanying it with tears and prayers, and thus it kept on until it had gone all through Scotland.

There is one feature in the signing of the covenant which gave it power and moral force. Not only did the people protest against the papacy and episcopacy, but they covenanted to serve God. Like the Jews in the time of Nehemiah, they bound themselves to each other to walk in God's law.

How the Scottish people were prepared to enter so unanimously and so earnestly into this solemn covenant may be imagined by one fact. Three years before, a young minister by the name of John Livingston preached on a communion day at a church in Shotts. He passed the whole night previously in prayer, and in the morning he stood upon a tombstone and spoke from the text, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you," etc. The Spirit of God was present in such power that five hundred persons dated their conversion from that sermon.

A legislative assembly was now held at Glasgow, in which appeared a great many of the nobility of Scotland. An accusation was brought against the bishops for simony and other crimes, which was publicly read in all the churches throughout the country. Eight were excommunicated, four deposed, and two suspended; and it was then boldly declared that all the acts of the Assembly and of Parliament, touching their religion, since the accession of James I., were null and void.

THE

REFORMATION IN GERMANY.



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CHAPTER I.

ROME IN HER ZENITH.

WHEN Luther arose on the horizon of the moral world, thick darkness had settled down upon the nations of Christendom.

“The violence of some popes; the shameful lives of others; the licentiousness of the city of Rome; the corrupt manners of the clergy; the appearance of two, and sometimes three popes, each having a party, abusing and excommunicating each other; the exactions by means of indulgences; the monstrous cruelty of the Inquisition—all these had at length waked up men to think.”*

The insolence of the popes in assuming temporal power was no less than their violence and immorality.

“Clement VI., in the bull of anathema which he issued against the emperor Louis of Bavaria, expresses himself thus: ‘May God strike him with imbecility and madness; may Heaven overwhelm him with its thunders; may the anger of God, with that of St. Peter and St. Paul, fall upon him in this world and in the next; may the whole universe revolt against him; may the earth swallow him up alive; may his name perish from the earliest generation, and .

* French Prize Essay of C. Villers.

may his memory disappear; may all the elements be adverse to him; may his children, delivered into the hands of his enemies, be crushed before his eyes, etc.''"*

Pretending to the right not only to govern the whole earth, but to possess it as his own, the pope deposed kings from their thrones, and conferred their dominions on whom he chose. And when America was discovered he assumed the right to give away the parts already known, together with all portions of it not yet discovered.†

The cruelty of Rome was equal to her insolence. It was a good action to torture a man who was not a Roman Catholic, so as to bring him into the bosom of the Church; and if he would not yield, it was right to kill him, so as to destroy the effect of his heretical example.‡

Her avarice equaled her cruelty. The clergy eagerly made use of every pretense to grasp earthly riches, and as a consequence a great proportion of the wealth of the nations was in their hands. This, together with their ecclesiastical influence, enabled them to seize the civil power, and the people were crushed to the earth by the iron heel of civil and spiritual despotism. The priests aimed at making the people worshipers of the Church, instead of worshipers of God; observers of church ceremonies, instead of the commandments of Christ; followers of outward forms, instead of inward purity; trusting to a thousand mere

* French Prize Essay of C. Villers. Rainaldi Ann. Eccles.

† Bull of Boniface VIII., called Unam Sanctam, which closes with these remarkable words: "Porro Subcsse Romano Pontifici omni humanae creature declaramus, dicimus, definimus, et pronunciamus omnino esse de necessitate salutis."

‡ "Ostendimus jam satis aperte justum esse, ut hereticus occidatur." *Alphonsus a Castro, De Justa Hereticorum Poena*, lib. ii, cap. 12.

rites, instead of possessing true religion, and consequent morality.

They too well succeeded, and the people followed their priests with a blindness which is yet feebly illustrated in our own day by the unlearned Romanist toward his spiritual guide. I say feebly, because in these days of light we can have but a small idea of the absolute power of the clergy previous to the Reformation. Was a man cursed then by the priest? He might be honorable, pious, holy, and just; but notwithstanding this all intercourse with him immediately ceased. His own family and friends became strange to him until the curse was removed. He became worse than a leper in society. Was a nation cursed? There was a universal panic; business ceased; the wheels of state stopped until the pope chose to bid them move. Was a king cursed? It was a signal for his people to arm against him, and to tear his crown from his head. His subjects were the tools of an idle and vicious priest, and their sole religion was implicitly to obey him.

Luther appeared, and a multitude of kindred spirits, who, led by the Spirit of God and by the writings of Wiclif, and others who had sought the truth, to the fountain of all authority, the word of God, found *there* no foundation for the absolute sway claimed by the clergy; but that, on the contrary, the Scriptures were the only rule of faith; and, lo! by this principle the priestly scepter was broken, and light burst everywhere through the gloom.

CHAPTER II.

DEATH OF JOHN HUSS AND JEROME OF PRAGUE.

AMONG those who studied Wiclid's writings and then the Bible, a century before Luther, was a Bohemian boy, sixteen years of age. They made a great impression on his heart and conscience, so much so that he afterward called Wiclid an angel from heaven, sent to enlighten him, and ever afterward spoke of meeting with these works as the most fortunate circumstance of his life. Though so young he did not let the things which he read slip from him, but began boldly a career of usefulness and devotion to God. This Bohemian boy is described after this event, by those who have written of him, as a real Christian. Gentle and condescending to others, long-suffering and full of charity toward their faults and yet strict with regard to himself, the great contest of his life was with sin. And yet from his very childhood he is said to have been remarkably exempt from faults which are common to other men. It is John Huss of whom we speak, from whom the Moravian brethren took their rise.

Having been ordained a Roman Catholic priest, he was appointed pastor of a church. But the holy fire that was in his heart broke forth, and in the pulpit as well as in private he preached plainly against the wicked lives of the priests and people. Wiclid's works were translated into the tongue of the Bohemian people, and were read everywhere. This could not fail to attract the attention of the pope, and the result of it was that Huss and others were excommunicated

from the most holy and immaculate Mother Church for following and teaching the word of God. This only seemed to increase the number of those who took sides with him. If he could not now preach he could write and talk, and in both of these ways he continued to labor for the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

While thus engaged he was summoned to appear before the famous Council of Constance. The Emperor Sigismund gave him a safe conduct to go and return, relying upon which he appeared before the fathers of the Romish Church. There he was accused of being a heretic, to which he made a most powerful defense. They urged him to recant; but he replied that he would rather die than knowingly preach what was not true.

One day, as he was seated in the gallery suspecting no danger, for the pope had promised him liberty and protection as well as the emperor, he was suddenly seized by a party of guards, and carried to a lonely monastery on the banks of the Rhine, where he was confined. This imprisonment was long and painful, and so manifestly unjust that even liberal Roman Catholics endeavored to procure his acquittal.

On the 7th of July, 1415, when about forty years of age, he was condemned. The bishops immediately stripped him of his priest's robes, and put a paper cap on his head, on which devils were painted, with the inscription, "A Ringleader of Heretics;" saying as they placed it on him, "Hereby we commit thy soul to the devil." He was then thrown, sick, exhausted, and hungry, into a cold dungeon. Being brought forth to the place of execution he was chained to the stake, and was surrounded by fagots ready for the match. All this time he seemed serene and happy.

The wood was kindled, and burned up all around his body; and as it burned they heard him singing in the midst of the fire. And he sang so loudly and cheerfully that his voice was distinguished above the crackling of the flames and the noise of the multitude. At last the smoke and flames blew in his face. When the wind cleared them away, his body, half burned, was hanging over the iron chain that bound him by the waist. His sufferings were over, and he was, no doubt, home at last.

Jerome of Prague was brought before the same council, and thrown into prison. He was there tortured, and exposed to want of food, until a dangerous sickness set in. Then, when he was weak in body and prostrated by illness, the priests gathered around him and in various ways endeavored to make him deny his principles. He continued for some time immovable, but in an unguarded moment, and probably when overcome by suffering, weakness, and hunger, he said that he believed Wiclit and Huss were in error, and that he was a firm believer in the Church of Rome. Their triumph however was not long. Smitten by his conscience, he soon came back to his old position, declared that he had done wrong, and asked for a trial. There he manfully defended the doctrines for which Huss had died, and seemed to be perfectly fearless of death. He was led to the stake; the fagots were kindled around him, and in the year 1416, like his friend Huss, he died singing in honor of Christ.

It was not in vain that Huss and Jerome gave their lives for the truth. Their countrymen rose in all parts, and with sword and pen fought bravely for their religious rights. Though a hundred years before the time of Luther, yet in Bohemia the doctrines of reform made wonderful progress. Called sometimes

Taborites, sometimes Hussites, until a portion of them took the name of Bohemian brethren, they successfully opposed the Emperor Sigismund, and gained national rights for themselves, which produced the double effect of disseminating greatly the truth, and preparing the way for the times of Luther.

Two hundred congregations of such men, who had borne all the persecutions and resisted all the encroachments of Romanism, existed in the beginning of the sixteenth century, only a few years before Luther raised his voice against the indulgences of Tetzel.

CHAPTER III.

LUTHER A BOY—A MONK—A PREACHER.

THE Bohemian brethren thus prepared the way for Luther and the principles which he advocated.

More than three hundred years ago a poor boy, fourteen years of age, was seen begging for food in Germany. From house to house he went, sometimes repulsed, and sometimes receiving the coarse fare he sought, until at last he returned to his home. This was the school of Magdeburg, where he was seeking an education, and in the intervals intended for recreation employed in obtaining bread.

A year afterward the same boy, scantily clad, might be recognized at the distinguished seminary of Eisenach. Perhaps a stranger might not notice him at first, but on looking closer he would be struck by the deep seriousness and earnestness which marked his features. Decision is on his lip, and notwithstanding its calm gaze the fires of impetuous feeling sleep in

his eye. Sometimes now he goes out and sings for the food which nature demands; and sometimes, weary, discouraged, faint, and hungry, is ready to give up the knowledge for which he so earnestly pants.

This was Martin Luther, born in the year 1483 in the town of Eisleben, of the Electorate of Saxony. Consecrated to God by a truly pious father and a devoted mother, whose earnest prayer had often been that he might become a useful man, and contribute to the spreading of the Gospel, Luther was perhaps unconsciously preparing himself to fulfill their anticipations.

We behold him again, when eighteen years of age, at the University of Erfurth, distinguished for his talents and genius, applying himself to a course of preparation for the study of the law.

Two years passed, and the young man was looking forward to a career of honor and earthly greatness. These aspirations were interrupted by an event which altered the whole course of his future life. Reading in the library of the university one day, he met with a Bible.* He took it up and looked at it, and read some passages. The more he read the more he wished to read, until he saw that he was not a Christian as he thought he was. He became alarmed at his spiritual condition. An intimate friend about the same time was suddenly assassinated,† which, with a

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Believing, according to the custom of the times, that true religion was to be found in the cells of the monasteries and nunneries, he determined to renounce the study of law, and secure his salvation by becoming a monk. Accordingly, when he was nearly twenty-two years of age, he entered the convent of the hermits of St. Augustine. Here he renounced all the worldly honor and fame which he had hoped to enjoy as a lawyer. But how truly did God give him a hundred fold! for what would his fame have been as a lawyer compared with what it has been as a reformer? So certain is it that even as regards the things of this life men do not generally lose but gain by renouncing them for God. But it was no doubt a struggle for Luther, as it is for every one. He wrote to his friends, bidding them farewell. It must have been a sorrowful day to him, as he sat in his lonely cell, with the solitary life of a monk before him, penning words of adieu to his mother, father, and other relatives. The next day he sent these letters to them, with the clothes he had worn until then.

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wound he accidentally received from his own sword, and a violent thunder-storm, served to deepen his impressions.

Believing, according to the custom of the times, that true religion was to be found in the cells of the monasteries and nunneries, he determined to renounce the study of law, and secure his salvation by becoming a monk. Accordingly, when he was nearly twenty-two years of age, he entered the convent of the hermits of St. Augustine. Here he renounced all the worldly honor and fame which he had hoped to enjoy as a lawyer. But how truly did God give him a hundred fold! for what would his fame have been as a lawyer compared with what it has been as a reformer? So certain is it that even as regards the things of this life men do not generally lose but gain by renouncing them for God. But it was no doubt a struggle for Luther, as it is for every one. He wrote to his friends, bidding them farewell. It must have been a sorrowful day to him, as he sat in his lonely cell, with the solitary life of a monk before him, penning words of adieu to his mother, father, and other relatives. The next day he sent these letters to them, with the clothes he had worn until then.

1852. The eighth edition, however, of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, published in 1857, corrects the statement, and says that Luther's friend was killed by assassination. This is evidently correct. Mathesius, who was a cotemporary of Luther, says: "A good comrade of his was assassinated, and a tremendous thunder-storm, with lightning, frightened him." Pp. 8, 4. Moritz Meurer, in his *Life of Luther*, published at Dresden in 1852, follows Mathesius, and adds, in a note: "What is here related is based on the testimony of three intimate friends of Luther, Melanchthon, Mathesius, and Katzenberger (his family physician toward the close of his life;) all other accounts are less authenticated, and in part probably embellished. . . . "This apocryphal account [that a friend called Alexius was struck dead by lightning] is repeated by most of the moderns without examination." Merle D'Aubigné also, in his *History of the Reformation*, follows Mathesius, vol. i, p. 159.

Did he succeed in obtaining what he sought? No. He was as greatly disappointed after he had been a short time in the convent as many have been who have entered such places since his time. Luther neither found the employments he expected, nor did he find the peace of mind which he was seeking. If he attempted to study as he had done at the university, he was constantly interrupted by the monks. They did not believe in so much learning. They were gratified that a young man of his ability and knowledge should abandon the university for their order; but they thought it would be well to humble him, so they gave him the lowest employments. The former master of arts performed the offices of porter, gate-opener, sweeper, and chambermaid in general for the convent. And when he got through the friars would say: "Away with your wallet through the town;" and he would then start with his bread bag, and wander from street to street, and from door to door, begging for the monks, until returning weary with his work he would shut himself up in his narrow cell, and seek to gain a few moments for reading and study. The monks would soon find him in his solitude, and take him away from his books, saying: "Come, come! It is not by studying, but by begging bread, corn, eggs, fish, meat, and money that a monk renders himself useful to the cloister." Perhaps Luther, having early learned the trade, was an adept in the art. He would submit, lay aside his books, and take up his bag again. He persevered in such occupations, believing them to be acceptable to God, until the university to which he had belonged interceded for his relief from them, and he was freed from his tasks.

Now he gave himself up with new zeal to study.

A Bible which was fastened by a chain in the convent was his favorite book. In it he constantly sought the comfort which he had hoped to find by becoming a monk. Shut up as in a prison, he struggled constantly against the evil inclinations of his nature. Penances and mortifications were resorted to in vain. Fasting and prayer seemed to bring no relief. A little bread and a herring were often his only food. O how earnestly he wished to have in his heart the assurance of his salvation! This was the great want of his soul. Without it there was no happiness for him. He says of his own spiritual state at this time:

“I tortured myself almost to death in order to procure peace with God for my troubled heart and agitated conscience; but surrounded with thick darkness, I found peace nowhere. I went every day to confession, but that was of no use to me. Then, bowed down with sorrow, I tortured myself by the multitude of my thoughts. ‘Look,’ I exclaimed, ‘thou art still envious, impatient, passionate. . . . It profiteth thee nothing. O wretched man, to have entered this sacred order!’”

John Staupitz was at this time vicar-general of the Augustine monks throughout Germany. Though a Roman Catholic priest, he was a good man. Amid all the corruptions and darkness of his age, he had sought light from the Scriptures, and had at last found peace with God. He became acquainted with Luther, and pitied his condition, for it resembled what his own had been.

“Why are you so sad, brother Martin?” said he one day.

“Ah,” replied Luther, with a deep sigh, “I do not know what will become of me. It is in vain that I make promises to God; sin is always the strongest.”

Staupitz then told him his own religious experience; and that he had found his own promises were broken again and again before he had obtained strength from God; and taught him to trust at once to the Saviour's love, without waiting to become any better.

"Look at the wounds of Jesus Christ," he continued. "Look to the blood that he has shed for you; it is there that the grace of God will appear to you. Instead of torturing yourself on account of your sins, throw yourselves into the Redeemer's arms. Trust in him; in the righteousness of his life, in the atonement of his death. Do not shrink back; God is not angry with you, it is you who are angry with God. Listen to the Son of God. He became man to give you the assurance of divine favor."

But Luther did not think he had the repentance necessary to salvation, and he replied, as many seekers of religion have done:

"How can I dare believe in the favor of God so long as there is no real conversion in me: I must be changed before he will accept me."

Staupitz endeavored to show him that trust in God, confidence in him even while yet sinners, works in us love to God; and as we love God we love whatever is good and whatever is his will. Thus our conversion takes place, for God, who has said to actual sinners, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," as soon as they begin to do so and to trust in his goodness, sends his promised Spirit in their hearts, whose heavenly influences produce this humble love, before which the cold heart melts and sin disappears, and the new-born Christian can say, in the language almost which Staupitz used to Luther, "We love him because he first loved us." Then, if he will go on in labors of love, and in the works *prompted* by a living faith, from this commencement

of sanctification, the same Spirit will lead him from being a child in Christ to the full stature of a perfect man, wherein every Christian grace shall be matured, and shine before men and God with a constant and steady light.

All this Staupitz did not perhaps explain to Luther, but what he did say to him filled the mind of the sorrowful monk with fresh hope.

He began to search the Scriptures with new views, but yet seemed not to come into the light which he sought. He was often distressed at the thought of death; and his own wickedness, compared with the holiness of God, filled him with fear.

There was an aged monk in the convent to whom Luther confided all his sorrows. *He* referred him to the Apostles' Creed, and repeated kindly, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." Luther repeated the words, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins."

"Ah," said the old man, "you must believe not only in the forgiveness of David's and of Peter's sins, for this even the devils believe. It is God's command that we believe our own sins are forgiven us. Hear what St. Bernard says: 'The testimony of the Holy Ghost in thy heart is this: Thy sins are forgiven thee.'"

From this moment light sprung up in Luther's heart. From this time he dates his conversion.

Two years passed in the convent and Luther was ordained priest. Another year, and the Elector of Saxony called him from his seclusion to become professor in the new University of Wittemberg. He shortly began to preach in the public square of that city. But to him whom we have been accustomed to regard as the personification of courage it was no easy task. It was no light cross to stand up and speak for Christ.

"O Dr. Staupitz, Dr. Staupitz," said he to the

vicar-general, "I cannot do it! I shall die in three months. Indeed I cannot do it."

"Well, Sir Martin," he replied, "if you must die you must; but remember that they need good heads up yonder too. So preach, man, preach, and then live or die as it happens."

This was good advice, and Luther took it and preached, and became the great and useful man he was. There was one thing in his sermons which particularly struck his hearers. He sought to say what would convert them rather than what would amuse them, as others had done. His deep seriousness, and the peace and joy which filled his heart imparted to his eloquence a divine warmth which others had not possessed, and soon the chapel could not contain the people who came to hear him. He was then invited to preach in the city church, and produced a still stronger impression; but yet, though converted to God and preaching the true Gospel, was still a firm Roman Catholic. He was not, however, long to remain so, for when the mind is enlightened and the heart changed the errors of Romanism naturally drop off; or if they do not, they take an opposite course and gather round the soul, and by degrees stifle the feelings and quench the pure light burning in the inner sanctuary of the heart.

CHAPTER IV.

LUTHER AT ROME.

LUTHER's confidence in his Church was first shaken by his well-known journey to the city of Rome. He was sent there as agent for seven monasteries of his order in a dispute which they had with the vicar-general. He expected to find in the city of the popes, in the grand center of the Roman Catholic Church, great sanctity. He thought to himself that a visit to such a holy place would be the means of doing him much good, and of advancing him greatly in piety.

He started on his journey and came into Italy, but what was his astonishment to find the sacred dominions of the pope worse than his own country Germany.

When night came he was entertained in a rich Benedictine convent, where the splendor of the apartments, the delicacy of the food, and the richness of the monks' dresses filled him with wonder. Silk robes, luxurious furniture, and marble pavements were strange sights to the German monk. But when Friday came, on which he certainly thought all good Roman Catholics should confine themselves to fish, he saw the table loaded with meat. He would keep no longer silence, but said :

“The Church and the pope forbid such things.”

The Italian monks were angry, and the porter of the monastery soon after hinted to Luther that it would be dangerous for him to stay longer.

He hurried on toward Rome, certain that he would there find true piety. At last he discovered the spires of the city in the distance, and immediately

knelt down, devoutly saying, "Holy Rome, I salute thee."

He entered and traversed the streets as one who was treading on holy ground. But soon he found that his brethren the priests in the heart of the Church were no better than their Benedictine brothers ; that eating meat instead of fish on Fridays was a very venial sin compared with the practices which he now beheld. And if he had undertaken the task of reprobating all the wickedness he saw in his associations with the priests, as he did on his entrance into Italy, he would have found enough to do to have detained him a long time in the metropolis of the pope. The people were no better than the priests, fulfilling the old proverb, "Like priest, like people." Luther said himself: "The city is filled with disorder and murder ; no one can imagine what sin and infamous actions are committed in Rome ; they must be seen and heard to be believed. Thus they are in the habit of saying, 'If there is a hell Rome is built over it.' It is an abyss whence issues every kind of sin."

Still he followed up those ceremonies which he believed would be beneficial to his soul. One day he was repeating mass very earnestly when one of the priests said to him, "Quick ! quick ! send our lady back her Son !" profanely alluding to the bread in the sacrament. He found that they had repeated seven masses while he had not finished one.

Another day he undertook to ascend Pilate's Staircase on his knees, as a penance. Before he reached the top he seemed to hear a voice as from the bottom of his heart : "The just shall live by faith." He started to his feet without finishing the penance, and saw at once the absurdity of the action.

It seems singular to us, in this age of light, that

Luther, who was no doubt a converted man, should cling so long to the errors of Romanism; but when we consider the period in which he lived our wonder ceases. There is one thing very certain, that he left Rome far less a Roman Catholic than when he came there.

We have thus traced the great Reformer through two periods of his life—his conversion, and the commencement of his disenthraldom from the papacy. Let us pause a moment, and consider the deep waters through which he was compelled to pass in coming thus far; and let us thank God for the light which is given to us, the clearer Gospel day which shines upon the pathway of those who would come unto Christ now. And while we pause, while we consider the great desire and earnestness of Luther to find peace to his troubled conscience, let us imitate him by believing in Christ as our Saviour.

CHAPTER V.

LUTHER AND TETZEL.

HAVING described the conversion of Luther and his visit to Rome, we will not stop to narrate circumstances having reference principally to Luther as an individual, but proceed to notice what brought him directly into collision with the Papal Church.

Leo X. was raised to be pope at the early age of thirty-eight years. He was a lover of the arts and of learning, and at the same time a lover of pleasure. Extremely prodigal, he required large sums to keep up the style of magnificence and luxury in which he

lived. He therefore had recourse to a scheme which had been practiced at different times since the eleventh century by the pope when his purse needed replenishing. This was the sale of certain paper documents, called indulgences, by which forgiveness of sins was promised to all who paid the sum named for the purchase of them.

In a book called the "Tax of the Sacred Roman Chancery" the sum to be paid for each particular sin is specified.* Some of them are as follows :

For taking a false oath in a criminal case, nine shillings.

For robbing, twelve shillings.

For burning a neighbor's house, twelve shillings.

For murdering a layman, seven shillings and six pence.

For laying violent hands on a clergyman, ten shillings and sixpence.

The form of the indulgence ran thus :

* The Roman Catholics have sometimes been anxious to repudiate this work, saying it was published by a Protestant. It is true that it was published by Antoine du Pinet, a Protestant; but where did Du Pinet get it? Did he find it in the Roman Catholic Church, or did he invent it? It is easy to settle this question by a reference to the history of the book itself. It was published by the Papal Church many times before Du Pinet gave it to the Protestant world, and also at different times afterward. The dates of some of such publications are as follows: At Rome in 1471; again in 1486, 1492, 1503, 1508, 1509, 1512, and 1514. At Cologne in 1515 and 1522. At Paris in 1520, in 8vo; 1531, 1533, and 1545, in 16mo. At Venice in 1532 and 1584. Two editions, without date, were published between 1472 and 1486, under the eyes of the popes Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., Alexander VI., Pius III., Julius II., and Leo X. "Nothing," says *La France Protestante*, "is more authentic than this appraisement, which puts almost the same price upon the absolution of murder, incest, violence, the most abominable crimes, as upon the transgression of the laws of the Church in reference to fasting and abstaining from meats; that is to say, a few crowns. We must add that Du Pinet, far from exaggerating, has not even produced all the abominations contained in the original Latin." *France Protestante*, tom. iv., p. 44.; *Bulletin de l'Histoire du Protestantisme*, année 1854, p. 210; *Histoire de la Ref. Franc.*, par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 407.

" May our Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon thee, and absolve thee by the merits of his most holy passion. And I, by his authority, that of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and of the most holy pope, granted and committed unto me in these parts, do absolve thee, first, from all ecclesiastical censures, in whatever manner they have been incurred ; then from all thy sins, transgressions, and excesses, how enormous soever they may be, even from such as are reserved for the cognizance of the holy see, and as far as the keys of the holy Church extend. I remit to you all punishment which you deserve in purgatory on their account ; and I restore you to the holy sacraments of the Church, to the unity of the faithful, and to that innocence and purity which you possessed at baptism ; so that when you die the gates of punishment shall be shut, and the gates of the paradise of delight shall be opened ; and if you shall not die at present, this grace shall remain in full force when you are at the point of death. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Friar John Tetzel, commissary, has signed this with his own hand."*

To carry out this infamous traffic in the souls of men agents were appointed in different places, or whole countries were sometimes farmed out, the same as a patent right is sold for a certain district or state. And as it would not fall very religiously on the ears of the people to say to them that the youthful pope wanted the money for his own personal pleasures, the capital idea was hit upon of applying some of it to carry on the building of that vast edifice, the immense proportions of which succeeding generations have gazed at in wonder, known as St. Peter's Church in

* D'Aubigné's Reformation, vol. i, p. 247.

Rome. The indulgence sellers then proclaimed that when the people paid their money to obtain the certified forgiveness of their sins, it was to build the great church of the apostle; and what was not used up by the agents, and then by Leo, was applied to this charitable object. It was certainly a very singular and ingenious way of raising money to build a church, but then it was sanctioned by him who claimed to be the head of all Christendom, the so-called vicegerent of heaven, the infallible pontiff of Rome, and therefore to most of the people it was all right. That the money realized was not very scrupulously used for the edifice of St. Peter may be inferred from one fact. A sister of Leo was married to a bastard son of Innocent VIII., a former pope. Through their influence Leo had been created cardinal when only fourteen years of age. Now, having reached the popedom, he showed his gratitude by bestowing upon his sister all the money that would be realized through the sale of indulgences from Savoy and that part of Germany between Savoy and the sea.*

John Tetzel, sometimes called John Thecel or Tecalius, a Dominican monk, was the chief commissary in this blasphemous trade for Germany. He traveled about with a great equipage, and wherever he went there was a great stir among the people. To obtain forgiveness of sins, and a preparation for heaven, has always been an important subject for fallen man; but now that the terms seemed to be made so easy, multitudes flocked to obtain the precious boon.

Tetzel was not backward in recommending the articles of his trade. In approaching a town with his procession, he sent a messenger to the authorities say-

* History of Council of Trent, published at London in 1676, p. 5.

ing, "The grace of God and of the Holy Father is at your gates." He was then conducted to the church by the priests, the nuns, and the people, men and women, young and old, with music, lighted tapers, banners, and bells, and opened the market. From the pulpit he then preached to the people.

"Come," said he, "and I will give you letters all properly sealed by which even the sins that you intend to commit may be pardoned.

"I would not change my privileges for those of St. Peter in heaven; for I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the apostle by his sermons.

"There is no sin so great that an indulgence cannot remit; and even if any one (which is doubtless impossible) had offered violence to the blessed virgin Mary, mother of God, let him pay, only let him pay well, and all will be forgiven him.

"But more than this," said he, "indulgences avail not only for the living but for the dead.

"For that repentance is not even necessary.

"Priest! noble! merchant! wife! youth! maiden! do you not hear your parents and your other friends who are dead, and who cry from the bottom of the abyss, 'We are suffering horrible torments; a trifling alms would deliver us; you can give it and, you will not.'

"At the very instant that the money rattles at the bottom of the chest the soul escapes from purgatory and flies liberated to heaven.

"With twelve groats you can deliver your father from purgatory, and you are ungrateful enough not to save him. I declare to you though you should have but a single coat you ought to strip it off and sell it in order to obtain this grace. The Lord our

God no longer reigns. He has resigned all power to the pope."

When he had finished this kind of preaching then the business commenced. The penitents confessed, and put the money demanded by the priests into the box, and received their papers, which were to give them a right and title to heaven as a deed at law gives a man a right to a lot of land.

Tetzel met with occasional difficulties however in his pious work.

The wife of a shoemaker had obtained a letter of indulgence, contrary to her husband's will, for which she had paid a gold florin. She died shortly afterward. After her death her husband, finding the paper, did not have any mass said for the repose of her soul as is usual. The priest thereupon charged him with contempt of religion, and the magistrate summoned him to appear in court. The shoemaker, taking his wife's indulgence with him, went to answer the complaint.

"Is your wife dead?" said the judge.

"Yes," he replied.

"What have you done for her?"

"I have buried her body, and commended her soul to God."

"But have you had a mass said for the repose of her soul?"

"I have not; it was of no use. She entered heaven at the moment of her death."

"How do you know that?"

"Here is the proof." Saying thus he took the indulgence from his pocket, and the magistrate read from it that the woman who had received it would not go into purgatory but would at once enter into heaven.

"If," added the husband, "the reverend gentleman maintains that a mass is still necessary, either my wife has been deceived by our most holy father the pope, or the priest is deceiving me."

The argument was conclusive, and the shoemaker was acquitted.

Another illustration may not be out of place. A Saxon nobleman hearing Tetzel at Leipsic was displeased with his falsehoods. He was resolved to entrap him. Going to him he asked:

"Have you the power to pardon sins which men intend to commit?"

"Most assuredly; I have received full powers from his holiness for that purpose."

"Well, I desire to take a slight revenge on one of my enemies without endangering his life, if you will give me a letter of indulgence that shall fully justify me."

Tetzel demanded thirty crowns for the indulgence asked. The nobleman paid it and went his way. Tetzel shortly afterward finished up his business at Leipsic, and left the place. As he passed through a wood, the Saxon nobleman was lying in wait, and there fell upon him and beat him, and carried off the money-box. Tetzel was in a great rage, and brought a complaint for the assault. The nobleman produced his indulgence and was acquitted.

But Luther was now about to raise his voice against this sacrilegious business. One day some persons who had bought their indulgence papers, and perhaps doubted their efficacy, came to confession while Luther was attending to this part of a priest's duty at Wittemberg. They confessed that they had been guilty of great crimes. Luther reprimanded them, told them they must forsake their sins; but they replied that they would not, and he thereupon told them that he

could not absolve them. They then appealed to their indulgences, and showed them to Luther, who replied that he had nothing to do with such papers, and added, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish; beware," he continued, "how you listen to the clamors of these indulgence merchants; you have better things to do than buy these licenses which they sell at so vile a price."

This was the origin of the celebrated dispute between Luther and Tetzel.

Some of the persons to whom Luther as a priest refused to grant absolution, complained to Tetzel, who became violently enraged that any one would dare to oppose him. As inquisitor he threatened to bring Luther before the Inquisition and burn him; who, so far from being daunted, prepared his ninety-five theses, and according to custom when notices were given or discussion invited, he affixed them to the doors of the church in Wittemberg. This was the 31st day of October, in the year 1517, at noon, before a crowd of people. It is said that within a month these theses were known throughout Christendom, and were soon translated from Latin, the language in which they were written, into German, Dutch, and Spanish. This may be considered as the commencement of the Reformation in Germany. By many they were received with great joy. The Bishop of Wurzburg, Lorenzo de Bibra, read them with delight, and publicly declared that he approved of Luther. It was this bishop to whom a gentleman once said he intended to put his daughter in a convent. "Better give her a husband," the good bishop replied. The Emperor Maximilian read and admired them, and said afterward, "What is your Augustine doing? In truth his propositions are not contemptible. He will play

the monks a 'pretty game.' Even Leo the pope, when asked to treat Luther as a heretic, replied: " 'Tis a mere monkish squabble; the best way is not to meddle with it." At another time he said: "It is a drunken German who has written these theses; when the fumes have passed off he will talk very differently." Rome has seldom been so charitable toward those who oppose her doctrines; but Leo, though pope, was rather a man of the world than a Roman Catholic, and cared more for luxury and enjoyment than he did for the Church. But many bitterly opposed Luther's propositions. Tetzel himself wrote theses in answer to them, and thus Germany was soon in a public ferment. Men, from the statements and arguments of priests, had recourse to the Bible to know who was right; and the more they read the Bible the more they were prepared to see all the errors of the Roman Catholic Church. Thus Luther went farther than he intended to do. In his ninety-five theses he had no intention of attacking the pope. Being still a Roman Catholic he rather defends him, saying that the indulgence sellers were doing wrong to the head of the Church. But men's minds were waked up. In seeking the forgiveness of sins at the confessional, and through the indulgences of Tetzel, they had not found the peace which they hoped for. The Spirit of God moving upon the hearts of the people, directed them to the words of him who opposed the indulgences, and many hearts were shaken in the trust which they had placed upon their "certified papers," and were led to say, "Perhaps after all these written pardons will not be good for anything at the hour of death; and doubting thus a written pardon, they were led to doubt the priest's word, and from that to search carefully the Bible to find some true foundation."

The public preaching and writings of Luther also awakened many. He directed them to the very point at which they were to aim for salvation.

“If a man,” said he, “does not experience within himself that peace of conscience, that joy of heart which proceeds from the remission of God, there are no indulgences that can aid him, even should he purchase all that have ever been offered upon earth.

“It is not the works which expel sin; but the sin once expelled, good works will follow. For good works must be performed with a joyful heart, with a good conscience toward God, that is, with remission of sins.

“The remission of the sin is in the power neither of the pope, nor of the bishop, nor of the priest, nor of any other man, but reposes solely on the word of Christ and on your own faith. For Christ designed not to build our consolation, our salvation, on the word or on the work of man, but solely on himself, on *his word* and on *his work*.

“A pope or a bishop has no more power than the lowliest priest as regards remission of sins. And even were there no priest, each Christian, even a woman or a child, can do the same thing. For if a simple Christian says to you, “God pardons sin in the name of Jesus Christ,” and you receive this word with a firm faith, and as if God himself were addressing you, you are absolved.

“If a pious Christian consoles thy conscience with the word of the cross, let it be man or woman, young or old, receive this consolation with such faith as rather to die many deaths than to doubt that it will be so before God. Repent. Do all the works in thy power, but let the faith thou hast in pardon through

Jesus Christ be in the foremost rank, and command alone on the field of battle."

Such preaching as this, so different from the preaching of indulgences, did not die upon the lips of the speaker. It was carried everywhere by those who heard it. It was a complete tearing away of the power of the priesthood. It was destroying the doctrine of the necessity of the prayers of the saints. It was bringing men right to the Saviour, to that mercy-seat where Christ was seated full of goodness and truth, not needing or desiring the intercession of any one, but more willing than all men, than all saints, than all the angels of heaven, to hear and answer prayer. Ever ready to look upon the broken and contrite in heart, and to listen to the most feeble prayer.

CHAPTER VI.

LUTHER'S MOTIVES — LUTHER AND IGNATIUS.

WE will pause in our narrative to consider two or three things which seem properly to come in here.

Luther's motives in resisting Tetzel have been violently assailed. It has been said that he was jealous because the sale of indulgences was given to a Dominican friar instead of an Augustine, he belonging to the latter order. Authors other than Roman Catholic have retailed this scandal. To correct this statement we use some remarks added by Dr. Mac-laine to his English translation of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv, which show conclusively the folly of this imputation. We give it without abridg-

ment, as it is an important question in deciding upon Luther's character:

“Dr. Mosheim has taken no notice of the calumnies invented and propagated by some late authors, in order to make Luther's opposition to the publication of indulgences appear to be the effect of selfish and ignoble motives. It may not, therefore, be improper to set that in a true light; not that the cause of the Reformation (which must stand by its own intrinsic dignity, and is in no way affected by the views or characters of its instruments) can derive any strength from this inquiry, but as it may tend to vindicate the personal character of a man who has done eminent service to the cause of religion.

“Mr. Hume, in his history of Henry VIII., has thought proper to repeat what the enemies of the Reformation, and some of its dubious and ill-informed friends, have advanced with respect to the motives that engaged Luther to oppose the doctrine of indulgences. This elegant and persuasive historian tells us that the ‘Austin friars had usually been employed in Saxony to preach indulgences, and from this trust had derived both profit and consideration; that Arcemboldi gave this occupation to the Dominicans;* that Martin Luther, an Austin friar, professor in the University of Wittemberg, *resenting the affront put upon his order*, began to preach against the abuses that were committed in the sale of indulgences, and being provoked by opposition proceeded even to decry indulgences themselves.’† It were to be wished that Mr. Hume's candor had engaged him to examine this accusation better before he had ventured to repeat it. For, in the first place, it is not true that

* Hume's History of England under the House of Tudor, vol. i, p. 119.

† *Id. ib.*, p. 120.

the *Austin friars* had been usually employed in Saxony to preach indulgences. It is well known that the commission had been offered alternately, and sometimes jointly, to all the mendicants, whether Austin friars, Dominicans, Franciscans, or Carmelites. Nay, from the year 1229 that lucrative commission was principally intrusted to the Dominicans;* and in the records which relate to indulgences we rarely meet with the name of an Austin friar, and not one single act by which it appears that the Roman pontiff ever named the friars of that order to the office under consideration.

“ More particularly it is remarked that for half a century before Luther, (that is, from 1450 to 1517,) during which period indulgences were sold with the most scandalous marks of avaricious extortion and impudence, we scarcely meet with the name of an Austin friar employed in that service, if we except a monk named Palzius, who was no more than an underling of the papal questor, Raymond Peraldus, so far is it from being true, that the Augustin† order were exclusively, or even usually employed in that service.‡

“ Mr. Hume has built his assertion upon the sole authority of a single expression of Paul Sarpi, which has been abundantly refuted by De Prierio, Pallavicini, and Graweson, the mortal enemies of Luther.

“ But it may be alleged that, even supposing it was not usual to employ the Augustine friars in the propagation of indulgences, yet Luther might be offended at seeing such an important commission given to the

* See Weismanni, *Memorabilia Historiæ Sacrae N. T.*, pp. 1051-1115.

† Augustin and Austin are used indiscriminately.

‡ See Harpii *Dissertat. de Nonnullis Indulgenciarum, sec. xiv et xv.*
Questoribus, p. 384-387.

Dominicans exclusively, and that, consequently, this was his motive in opposing the propagation of indulgences. To show the injustice of this allegation I observe,

Secondly. That in the time of Luther the preaching of indulgences was become such an odious and unpopular matter, that it is far from being probable that Luther would have been solicitous about obtaining such a commission either for himself or for his order. The princes of Europe, with many bishops, and multitudes of learned and pious men, had opened their eyes upon the turpitude of this infamous traffic; and even the Franciscans and Dominicans, toward the conclusion of the fifteenth century, opposed it publicly, both in their discourses and in their writings.* Nay, more, the very commission which is supposed to have excited the envy of Luther was offered by Leo to the general of the Franciscans, and was refused both by him and his order,† who gave it over entirely to Albert, Bishop of Mentz and Magdeburg. Is it then to be imagined that either Luther or the other Austin friars aspired after a commission of which the Franciscans were ashamed? Besides, it is a mistake to affirm that this office was given to the Dominicans in general, since it was given to Tetzel alone, an individual member of that order, who had been notorious for his profligacy, barbarity, and extortion.

“But that neither resentment nor envy were the motives that led Luther to oppose the doctrine and publication of indulgences, will appear with the utmost evidence if we consider, in the third place, that he was never accused of any such motives, either in the

* See Walch. *opp. Luther*, tom. xv, pp. 114, 283, 312, 349; Seckendorff, *Hist. Lutheranismi*, lib. i, sec. vi, p. 13. † See Walch. *loc. cit.*, p. 371.

edicts of the pontiffs of his time, or amid the other reproaches of the cotemporary writers who defended the cause of Rome, and who were far from being sparing of their invectives and calumnies. All the cotemporary adversaries of Luther are absolutely silent on this head. From the year 1517 to 1546, when the dispute about indulgences was carried on with the greatest warmth and animosity, not one writer ever ventured to reproach Luther with these ignoble motives of opposition now under consideration. I speak not of Erasmus, Sleidan, De Thou, Guicciardini, and others, whose testimony might be, perhaps, suspected of partiality in his favor, but I speak of Cajetan, Hogstrat, De Prierio, Emser, and even the infamous John Tetzel, whom Luther opposed with such vehemence and bitterness. Even Cochlaeus was silent on this head during the life of Luther; though, after the death of that great Reformer, he broached the calumny I am here refuting. But such was the scandalous character of this man, who was notorious for fraud, calumny, lying, and their sister vices,* that Pallavicini, Bossuet, and other enemies of Luther, were ashamed to make use either of his name or testimony.

“Now, may it not be fairly presumed that the cotemporaries of Luther were better judges of his character, and the principles from which he acted, than those who lived in after times? Can it be imagined that motives to action which escaped the prying eyes of Luther’s cotemporaries, should have discovered themselves to us, who live at such a distance of time from the scene of action, to M. Bossuet, to Mr. Hume, and to other abettors of this ill-contrived and foolish story? Either there are no rules

* Sleidan, *De Statir. Rel. et Reip. in Dedic.*, Epist. ad August. Elector.

of moral evidence, or Mr. Hume's assertion is entirely groundless.

"I might add many other considerations to show the unreasonableness of supposing that Luther exposed himself to the rage of the Roman pontiff, to the persecutions of an exasperated clergy, to the severity of such a potent and despotic prince as Charles V., to death itself, and that from a principle of avarice and ambition. But I have said enough to satisfy every candid mind. Whoever is desirous of knowing more on this subject need only consult 'Histoire du Renouvellement l'Evangile, par Gerdes, tom i, p. 96,' quoted by La Courayer in his translation of the History of the Reformation by Sleidan, tom. i, p. 1; and finally, Letter XI. of L'Enfant's book, entitled, 'Preservatif contre la Reunion avec le Siege de Rome, ou Apologie de notre Separation d'avec ce Siege. Amsterdam, 1723. 4 vols.' This letter is in the first volume, p. 27, and following ones."

Luther has also been accused of harshness, and violence in his language. This has some foundation in truth. But when we consider the times in which he lived, the Church in which he had been reared, we must say, as we have already said in a general sense, that the vestiges of Romanism yet were clinging to him. What could be expected of the humble monk when the holy father himself uses such language as is found in the different documents which proceeded from the holy see?

Take, for example, the one found in our first chapter, issued by Clement VI., commencing:

"May God strike him with imbecility and madness; may heaven overwhelm him with its thunders; may the anger of God, with that of St. Peter and St. Paul, fall upon him in this world and in the next."

If anything could stir a man up to severity it would be the spirit in which Luther has been assailed by his adversaries. An extract from *Damianus*, one of the first historians of the Jesuits, will show this. He is comparing Luther with Ignatius de Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits.

"In the same year, 1521, Luther, moved by a consummate malice, declared war openly against the Church. Wounded in the fortress of Pampeluna, having become better and as it were stronger from his wound, Ignatius raised the standard in defense of religion.

"Luther attacks the see of St. Peter with insults and blasphemies. Ignatius, as if to undertake his cause, is miraculously cured by St. Peter.

"Luther, subdued by rage, ambition, and lust, quits a religious life. Ignatius, eagerly obeying the call of God, changes from a profane to a religious life.

"Sacrilegious Luther contracts an incestuous marriage with a holy virgin of God. Ignatius binds himself by a vow of perpetual continency.

"Luther contemns all the authority of his superiors. The first precepts of Ignatius, full of Christian humility, are to submit and obey.

"Luther declaims like a fury against the holy see. Ignatius everywhere supports it.

"Luther draws as many from it as he can. Ignatius conciliates and brings back as many to it as he can.

"All Luther's studies and enterprises are directed against it. Ignatius, by a special vow, consecrates his labors, with those of his associates, to it.

"Luther detracts from the veneration and worship of the sacred rites of the Church. Ignatius maintains all veneration for them.

“The sacrifice of the mass, the eucharist, the mother of God, the tutelary saints, the indulgences of the pontiffs, and the things attacked by Luther with such fury, were objects which the industry of Ignatius and his companions was eagerly and continually employed in seeking new modes of celebrating.

“To this Luther, the disgrace of Germany, the hog of Epicurus, the destroyer of Europe, the accursed portent of the universe, the abomination of God and men, etc., God, in his eternal wisdom, opposed Ignatius.”

CHAPTER VII.

EFFORTS MADE TO INDUCE LUTHER TO RECANT— HE IS EXCOMMUNICATED.

WHILE the pope regards with indifference the ninety-five theses of Luther, the minds of the Germans are wonderfully waking up. Leo is soon forced to see that the movement is becoming more formidable than he supposed. He therefore appointed Cardinal Cajetan to try Luther, with instructions either to obtain a recantation from him, or keep him safely until he could be brought to Rome.

Was Luther now to become a martyr, and suffer death as others had done for their piety? He is summoned to Augsburg. He goes, and would probably have soon been on his way a prisoner to Rome, had not his friends obtained for him a safe conduct soon after his arrival, and before he had shown himself to the cardinal.

Urban of Serra Longa, pretending to be his friend waited on him and urged him to be reconciled to the Church, and recant what he had said and written. He told him that the cardinal was favorable to him, and if he would show an humble spirit all would be well. He advised him, when he came into his presence, to conduct himself as coming before a prince of the Church, to prostrate himself with his face to the ground, and when told to rise, to get up upon his knees, and then to wait for further orders before he ventured to stand upright.

In due time Luther appeared before Cajetan, and according to the directions he had received prostrated himself, and when the cardinal told him to rise, he rose to a kneeling posture, until he was told again to rise, and then he stood up. Luther afterward rose above this abject reverence toward the heads of the Church, of whom Christ had said, "Be *ye* servants." Both of them remained silent for some time. What must have been the impression which the great Reformer then made upon the cardinal? There he stood, as an eloquent historian has described his appearance, with "a coarse, rugged, plebeian face," "with great crags of cheek bones, a wild amount of passionate energy." "But in his dark eyes were floods of sorrow; and deepest melancholy, sweetness, and mystery were all there."*

At last Luther spoke:

"Most worthy father, in obedience to the summons of his papal holiness, and in compliance with the orders of my gracious lord the Elector of Saxony, I appear before you as a submissive and dutiful son of the holy Christian Church, and acknowledge that I have published the propositions and theses ascribed

* Carlyle.

to me. I am ready to listen most obediently to my accusation, and if I have erred, to submit to instruction in the truth."

The cardinal replied :

" My dear son, you have disturbed all Germany by your dispute on indulgences. I understand that you are a very learned doctor in the Holy Scriptures, and that you have many followers. For this reason, if you desire to be a member of the Church, and to find a gracious father in the pope, listen to me. Here are three articles which, by the command of our holy father, Pope Leo X., I have to set before you : *First*, You must bethink yourself, own your faults, and retract your errors, propositions, and sermons. *Secondly*, You must promise to abstain in future from propagating your opinions. *Thirdly*, Bind yourself to behave with greater moderation, and avoid everything that may grieve or disturb the Church."

Luther then made what Cajetan must have considered a very bold request.

" Most holy father, I beg you will show me the pope's brief, by virtue of which you have received full powers to treat of this matter."

" This request, my dear son, cannot be granted. You must confess your errors, keep a strict watch upon your words for the future, and not return like a dog to his vomit, so that we may sleep without anxiety or disturbance ; then, in accordance with the order and authorization of our most holy father, the pope, I will arrange the whole business."

Luther made a still bolder request.

" Condescend then to inform me in what I have erred."

Cajetan replied :

" *Most* dear son ! here are two propositions that you

have advanced, and which you must retract before all: *First*, The treasure of indulgences does not consist of the sufferings and merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Second*, The man who receives the holy sacrament must have faith in the grace that is presented to him."

He then proceeded to combat what he called Luther's errors, saying :

"In confuting your errors, I will not appeal to the authority of St. Thomas and other doctors of the schools; I will rely entirely on Holy Scripture, and talk with you in all friendliness."

But Cajetan, instead of confining himself to Scripture, proceeded to quote one of the constitutions of Pope Clement, when Luther replied :

"I cannot receive such constitutions as sufficient proofs on matters so important; for they pervert the Holy Scriptures, and never quote them to the purpose."

Cajetan replied :

"The pope has power and authority over all things."

"Except Scripture," Luther rejoined quickly.

Thus they continued until, when faith was referred to, Luther asserted :

"As to the article of faith, if I make the slightest concession I should renounce Jesus Christ. I cannot, I will not yield on this point, and, with God's grace, I will never yield."

Cajetan then assumed a more positive manner, saying :

"Whether you will or whether you will not, you must retract that article this very day, or upon that article alone I shall reject and condemn your whole doctrine."

"I have no will but the Lord's. Let him do with

me as seemeth good to him. But if I had four hundred heads, I would rather lose them all than retract the testimony which I have borne to the holy Christian faith."

"I did not come here to dispute with you. Retract or prepare to suffer the penalty you have deserved."

This was closing up the argument in a very summary manner, and Luther prepared to withdraw. The cardinal proposed to him to go to Rome. This would have been to have delivered himself into the lion's mouth, even under protection of a safe conduct, which Cajetan offered him. A second and third conference took place, at the close of which the cardinal said :

"Retract, or return no more."

Several days passed. Luther wrote to the cardinal, but received no reply. He began to fear they were plotting some plan forcibly to seize him and carry him to Rome, or to take his life by some shorter means. He therefore prepared an appeal to the pope himself, in which he asserted that he appealed from the pope ill-informed to the pope better informed. This appeal was posted on the cathedral gates two or three days after he left Augsburg. He also wrote a letter to Cajetan, part of which is as follows :

"**MOST WORTHY FATHER IN GOD:** Your paternal kindness has witnessed—I repeat it, witnessed and sufficiently acknowledged my obedience. I have undertaken a long journey, through great dangers, in great weakness of body, and despite of my extreme poverty; at the command of our most holy lord, Leo X., I have appeared in person before your eminence; lastly, I have thrown myself at the feet of his holiness, and I now wait his good pleasure, ready to submit to

his judgment, whether he should condemn or acquit me. I therefore feel that I have omitted nothing which it becomes an obedient child of the Church to do.

"I think, consequently, that I ought not uselessly to prolong my sojourn in this town. Besides, it would be impossible; my resources are failing me, and your paternal goodness has loudly forbidden me to appear before you again unless I retract.

"I therefore depart in the name of the Lord, desiring, if possible, to find some spot where I may dwell in peace. . . ."

Luther early in the morning flies on horseback from Augsburg. He returns to Wittemburg.

Cajetan was greatly annoyed, for his victim had escaped from him, and he had accomplished nothing. The pope would blame him, and the whole affair would be discreditable to him as a great officer of the Church.

He wrote to Frederic, the Elector of Saxony, one of the powerful protectors of the infant Reformation, and one whose name should be among the foremost in a history of the German Reformation, to send him to Rome, or to expel him from his territory. Frederic refused to accede to the pope's desires.

About this time the Emperor Maximilian died, in consequence of which the pope found himself so much embroiled in political matters that he had little time to attend to Luther. The Elector Frederic became protector of the empire, by which, for a short period, he held the supreme power in his hands. The pope thereupon, hoping to win Frederic to his side, sent him the golden rose, a gift which had been long considered one of the choicest which could come from

the Roman court, and one which had always been greatly prized even by kings and princes. But Frederic, instead of publicly receiving it as a very distinguished honor, coldly requested that it might be delivered to one of his officers to be conveyed to him.

Notwithstanding all that had yet occurred, and notwithstanding all that Luther had written, and all that had been written against him, he seems still to be a true Roman Catholic, as the following extracts from a letter to the pope written about this time will testify :

“ Blessed father, may your holiness condescend to incline your paternal ear, which is that of Christ himself, toward your poor sheep, and listen kindly to his bleating? What shall I do, most holy father? I cannot bear the lightnings of your anger, and I know not how to escape them. I am called upon to retract. I would most readily do so could that lead to the desired result. But the persecutions of my adversaries have circulated my writings far and wide, and they are too deeply graven on the hearts of men to be by any possibility erased. . . . Most holy father, I declare in the presence of God, and of all his creatures, that I have never desired, and that I shall never desire to infringe, either by force or by stratagem, upon the power of the Romish Church or of your holiness. I confess that nothing in heaven or in earth should be preferred above that Church, except Jesus Christ alone, the Lord of all.”

This letter shows how little Luther thought of separating from the Romish Church. Had she allowed him, and those who wished to live according to the Bible, to remain peaceably within her pale, his adversaries might with more justice talk of Luther’s separation. But he was followed up by complaint

after complaint, persecution after persecution, until he was excommunicated and driven from the Church with the most bitter denunciations. Let no one, then, hereafter say that Luther separated from Rome, but that Rome separated from Luther, and drove him from her.

Shortly before the above letter was written the pope had appointed a new legate, Charles of Miltitz, either to obtain a recantation from Luther, or to bring him to Rome. If he only could be brought to any place within the pope's power, and away from the protection of Frederic, it would be easy to dispose of him. Miltitz, arriving in Germany, took a course of the utmost apparent mildness toward Luther. He saw it was of no use to adopt any other. He heard complaints against Tetzel, the indulgence peddler, the adversary of Luther. Most severely did he reprimand him, until he, who had once been so arrogant, became stricken with shame, and never afterward recovered himself. He died shortly after, a prey to remorse and grief.

Miltitz seemed to have much success with Luther, for they both went so far as to agree that each party should be silent for the future, and until some bishops might be appointed by the pope to name the articles which Luther must retract.

This silence, however, did not last long, for Eccius, a Romish champion, broke the agreement by a public dispute with Carlstadt, into which Luther was brought, who then publicly disputed with Eccius, and here the Reformer took a fresh stride in the knowledge of truth, and here his eyes were more than ever opened to see the errors of Rome. Even subsequent to this dispute Miltitz urged him to some agreement with the pope; but he now took an uncompromising attitude,

and, instead of yielding any ground to the legate, wrote the celebrated letter or memorial to the pope in which occurs the following words: "Let no one, most holy father, imagine that I will sing a palinode unless he wishes to arouse a still greater tempest. *I will admit of no restraint in interpreting the word of God.*" Noble sentiment! It is a blessing to us that Luther ever uttered it, and that with firmness he adhered to it. Had he wavered, it would have destroyed the confidence of men in his positions, and thrown back, no one can tell how far, the infant Reformation. His writings had already been scattered and translated through the greater part of Europe; and what a stroke to true religion it would have been, could it have been said by Romanists that their author no longer acknowledged their truth!

In the mean time the pope published a bull in favor of indulgences, on which Luther published a memorial appealing from the pope to a general council, an act of great impiety toward the holy father; at least so considered by the latter. On the 15th day of June, 1520, and after receiving the memorial just referred to, the pope published a second bull, in which he set forth some of the pernicious, poisonous, and scandalous doctrines of Luther. Among them is the following: "To say that burning heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Ghost." This was one of Luther's assertions, one of Luther's doctrines. But the most holy father, and head of the most holy Catholic Church, insists that any such statement is curtailing his liberty and stinting his privileges, and that it is a pernicious, poisonous, and scandalous heresy. It would be outrageous to cut him off from burning his Bible-reading subjects.

The bull goes on to say that Luther shall be ex-

communicated, unless in sixty days he forward a recantation to Rome, or else, as it is literally expressed, "which would be far more agreeable to us, that he come to Rome in person." As to the last clause no one could doubt the truth of that. It would be far more agreeable to the heart of the tender and compassionate father to see Luther in Rome, so that he might at leisure, through his inquisitors, burn, torture, and tear his flesh, and leave his body to wear out in some filthy dungeon until he could make him believe in the virtue of indulgences.

But Luther had more good sense than to go to Rome, or to send any recantation within the sixty days allotted to him. On the contrary, he publicly burned the pope's bull amid a vast assemblage of people at Wittemburg, renounced the authority of the pope, exhorted the princes of Europe to shake off the oppressive yoke, and offered thanks to God that he was selected as the advocate of true religion, and a friend to the liberties of mankind.

He also published a document, in which he says he has no desire to be absolved from the censures leveled against him. "Farewell," he concludes, "farewell, O Rome, thou thrice-accursed abomination! Thou art filled with so much impiety and foolishness as are unworthy even to be refuted!"

At last, on the 6th day of January, 1521, sentence of final excommunication was thundered against Luther, in which he is declared a heretic, a son of perdition, and an eternal outcast, expelled the communion of the faithful, and delivered over to Satan.

This is an important day for the German Reformation.

The manner in which the pope's bull of excommunication was received shows what progress the doctrines

of the Bible had made. A century before it would have shaken the foundations of the whole kingdom ; now it was read and spoken of in Germany with contempt.

Such success had God given his faithful witnesses.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PEASANT WAR—THE JESUITS.

THE year 1521 is a year to be remembered in the history of the Reformation. It is the year in which Luther renounces Rome ; the year in which Rome afterward renounces him ; the year of the well known Diet of Worms, in which he is condemned by that body ; the year of the breaking out of the celebrated peasant war ; and the year in which Ignatius de Loyola, founder and first general of the order of Jesuits, is wounded at the siege of Pampeluna, and resolves to devote himself to works of piety.

To these two latter events we will briefly turn our attention. As in France in the time of the French Revolution, the superstitions of Romanism had driven men to infidelity, so in Germany and the neighboring countries, as Luther sounded the trumpet of the Gospel, and men began to feel they were free to think, it was not to be expected that nations unable generally to read, and trained in the absurdities of Rome, would be able to go just so far and no further. It came to pass that while Luther and those who had sufficient light from the word of God knew when to stop, a great many others went from one extreme to the other. Under the leadership of Munzer, Stüber, etc., multitudes of peasants and others assembled,

and held that among Christians, properly instructed, the office of magistrate was unnecessary; that the distinctions occasioned by birth, rank, or wealth, should be abolished; that all Christians, throwing their possessions into one stock, should live together as one family, and that polygamy was to be allowed. Pretending to have received visions and revelations from heaven, they rapidly propagated their doctrines. Luther and the other Reformers raised their voices loudly against them, and the peasants perceiving this undertook to spread their opinions by force of arms. Munzer put himself at the head of a numerous army and declared war against all laws, governments, and magistrates, saying that Christ himself has now to take the reins of government into his hands. They were defeated by the Elector of Saxony, and Munzer put to death. Again in 1533 a large party of them settled at Munster, and made themselves masters of the city, but were ultimately defeated.

There is no doubt that such fanaticism retarded the progress of the Reformation. Reasonable men saw that their tenets were absurd, and yet associated them with the tenets of Luther, when in fact they were only the reaction of the mind long bent in one way, and long in ignorance and spiritual chains.

We turn to Ignatius. His influence and that of his followers upon the early Reformation was not so great as it has since been upon the progress of true religion in Roman Catholic countries. The rise of the Jesuits was not rapid enough at first to accomplish a great deal. Charles V. did not encourage them; the universities of France resisted their introduction into the country, and when in 1540 the pope authorized their institution their disciples were said to be but ten. In the year 1608 their number amounted

to ten thousand five hundred and eighty-one. Before the close of the sixteenth century they had obtained the chief direction of the education of youth in every Roman Catholic country in Europe, and had become the confessors of almost all their monarchs. In spite of their vow of poverty their wealth increased with their power, and they soon rivaled in the extent and value of their possessions the most opulent monastic fraternities. And wherever they went the minds of men became more and more enslaved. The pernicious doctrine of constant and absolute submission to the authority of their superiors without examination, left no recourse to the Bible, or to any other standard. And as they increased they ingrafted this essential tenet of Romanism upon the mind wherever the rising light of the Reformation had broken it off. And if they went as missionaries to foreign lands, as they did everywhere, it was not the Gospel they taught, but submission to Rome and their order. It was not a renunciation of heathen idolatry which they inculcated upon their ignorant converts, but an incorporation of idol worship into religion under the name of Christianity. It was not a forsaking of sin which they preached, but a regulation of it under priestly direction. Entering a country with all the apparent humility of true Christians, they commenced their labors among the people; and as their power and influence increased, their humility was laid aside, and an absolute sway over heart, mind, and conscience aimed at or established. And such also was their system in education. There have been learned men and polished writers among the Jesuits, we admit, but their education has always been partial and one-sided; and wherever they have the instruction of young persons confided to them it is the same thing. They teach the

languages and the arts, but at the same time more effectually instill what is truly Romanism, whether called so by them or not. They make their pupils like those valuable slaves of the great men of antiquity, who were grammarians, poets, rhetoricians, skillful dancers, and musicians, everything but freemen.

We return now to the thread of our narrative.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DIET OF WORMS.

THE Diet of Worms, as we have said, was held in the year 1521. It was the first great ecclesiastical assemblage since Charles V. had come to the throne of Germany. Here Luther was to be arraigned. The object of this arraignment was not to condemn him by the pope, for that was done already, but to obtain his condemnation by a sufficient authority to get him out of the hands of Frederic of Saxony.

Girolamo Aleander was appointed by the pope to superintend there the extermination of the widespread heresies. A man of great ability, he appeared before the princes of the Church, and by an oration of three hours in length urged them to take immediate steps to crush the religious rebellion.

The Elector Frederic, ever on the alert when Luther was concerned, checked the rising hopes of Aleander by urging that Luther should not be condemned unless he were present. This seemed so reasonable that the proposition was carried, and Luther was forthwith summoned before the Diet of

Worms. At the same time a safe conduct from the Emperor Charles V. was sent to him.

We might as well say here that in Frederic, Elector of Saxony, Luther possessed not only a decided friend, but a very powerful one. As it has been remarked, he had become protector of the empire ; this was previous to the accession of Charles V. Afterward the imperial throne itself was offered to him, which he declined. And now when Charles V. had become monarch of the German states and the immense possessions which belonged to the crown of Spain, Frederic still retained his influence.

When the summons arrived for Luther from Worms his friends were alarmed, and begged him to pay no attention to it. They reminded him that John Huss, though protected by a safe conduct, had been seized at the Council of Constance, and burned. But Luther was determined to go at all hazards. With a courage which well befits the Christian character, he replied :

“I will neither recant nor flee. I will go to Worms in spite of all the gates of hell and the prince of the power of the air.”

The imperial herald waited to accompany him, and without delay he set out. The journey was a complete triumph for the Reformer and the Reformation. Everywhere great multitudes assembled to greet the man who had so boldly lifted his voice against the oppressions and errors of Rome. But his friends feared that he was on his way to the martyr’s crown. They thought he would never come alive out of the hands of his enemies ; and after he had started they wrote to him, urging him to return. His answer has become like household words :

“In the name of the Lord, I will be there. I will

enter into the very mouth of Behemoth, and there acknowledge Christ. Into that place will I go, though there be in it as many devils as there are tiles upon the houses."

How gloriously would the kingdom of God roll onward if the breast of every Christian were fired by a courage like this! We are not often called, as Luther was, to brave imprisonment and death; we are not now called to go from city to city where bonds and violent persecutions await us; but we are called to possess a like courage, *held in reserve* for any such possibility; and then those lighter crosses and trials which occur in the daily life will sit easy on the already consecrated heart.

On the 16th day of April, 1521, Luther entered Worms. There also crowds of people gathered round to express their sympathy and admiration of his courage.

As he approached the assembly the next morning an old captain of the imperial army laid his hand on his shoulder, saying:

"Monk, beware what you do! You are in more danger than any of us have ever braved upon the field of battle; but if you are in the right road, go forward in God's name, and be sure that he will not forsake you."

He entered the assembly. There was the Emperor Charles V.; there were the barons of Germany; there were the ecclesiastical princes and heads of the Church; a tribunal than which a more imposing had seldom assembled. And the poor monk entered and stood among them, awaiting his judgment. Already excommunicated, already under the ban of the pope, could he expect any mercy from those who were greedy to emulate their master in persecution?

It would be difficult to describe the feelings with which he waited for the commencement of the proceedings against him. It must have been with the most intense excitement that he looked around upon the august assembly. It may have been with something like regret that he had ever ventured among them, or with a kind of fear that he should never be able to leave the place alive; or rather, was not the God of Israel there, giving triumphant boldness to his heart, as he did to Elijah on Carmel, and as he did to Daniel among the lions? Was there not One by his side, just as near to him as he once was to Shadrach and his two companions, as they walked loose in the midst of the flames?

The proceedings were commenced against him. Two principal questions were demanded of Luther: one was, whether he acknowledged the books which had been so widely circulated under his name; the other, if he would now retract their contents.

Luther replied humbly, calmly, and yet decidedly. He said that when he had inculcated Christian faith and morals, his accusers allowed he had done so in a scriptural manner. To retract these portions would be to deny that on which all were agreed. In other parts of his writings he said he had attacked the abuses of the papacy. To retract here would be to help to continue these abuses. The remainder of his publications, he admitted, had been written in a too vehement and acrimonious spirit; but these he could not take back, fearing he might sanction those practices of the Church which were contrary to Scripture. He appealed again to Scripture, saying if they would convince him from this, he would be the first to cast his books into the flames.

He spoke with gentleness and mildness, holding

his feelings in perfect control. But he was told in reply that he had only traveled from the question, and he was expected to give a direct reply. "It was then," says one of his biographers, "that the mighty heart of the Reformer conceived an answer, which, for pregnant solemnity and calm heroism, is, beyond all other words in modern history, sublime."

"Since, then, your imperial majesty, and your highnesses now assembled, require a plain, simple, and brief answer, I will render one without reservation or evasion. Unless I shall be convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or by other and manifest reasons, (for upon the authority of popes and councils alone I cannot rely, since it is clear that they have often erred, and even contradicted one another,) I neither can nor will revoke anything that I have written, seeing that to act against conscience is neither safe nor honest. HERE I STAND. I CAN DO NO OTHER. GOD HELP ME! AMEN."

Sentence of outlawry was pronounced upon Luther, to take effect in twenty-one days from his departure from the diet. After that time whoever would read, print, or circulate any of his writings, or countenance, harbor, or assist him, was to incur the same penalty as himself. And every subject of the emperor was charged to aid in capturing or destroying him.

CHAPTER X.

MELANCTHION — BUGENHAGIUS.

THE edict which was passed against Luther declared “that it belonged to the duty of the emperor to advance religion, and to extinguish heresies which began to spring up; . . . that friar Martin Luther endeavored to stain Germany with that contagion, so that if he were not hindered all that nation would fall into a horrible ruin; that Pope Leo had fatherly admonished him, and after that the assembly of cardinals, and other excellent men, had condemned his writings and decreed him a heretic if within a certain term he revoked not his errors; and had sent by Girolamo Aleander, his nuncio, a copy of that bull of condemnation to him, the emperor, as protector of the Church, desiring him it might be put in execution in the empire, his kingdoms, dominions, and provinces; that notwithstanding this, Martin amended not himself; yea, multiplied his books daily, full not only of new heresies, but even of those which have been long since condemned by holy councils, and not only in the Latin tongue, but in the German also, naming in particular many of his errors; he concluded that there was no writing of his where there was not to be found some contagion or deadly sting, so that it might be said that every word was a poison; that these things being considered by him, the emperor, and his counselors of all nations subject unto him, treading in the steps of the Roman emperors, his predecessors, having conferred in that Diet of Worms with the electors, and many of other states of the

empire by their counsel and assent, (though it was not fit to hear a man condemned by the pope, obstinate in his perverseness, and a notorious heretic, notwithstanding to take away all occasion of cavil, many saying it was necessary to hear the man before the pope's decree was executed,) he resolved to send to fetch him by one of his heralds."*

This specimen is sufficient to convey an idea of what the whole document was.

Thus condemned, Luther left Worms to go home. He had not gone far when a band of armed and masked horsemen surrounded and seized him. He was carried by them to the Castle of Wartburg.

Was he then so soon to meet his fate? Was the Protestant cause so soon to be deprived of their courageous and eloquent defender? Thank God, no. These armed men were the soldiers of the elector Frederic, his friend, and they seized him for the purpose of protecting him from those who would seek his life. He continued in this retreat about ten months, and there, besides other valuable works, conceived the design, and commenced the translation of the Bible, which, with the help of Melanthon, he completed in the year 1523.

It was about this time that Henry VIII. unintentionally conferred a great benefit on the advancing cause of truth. Entering the theological arena, by his kingly dignity he attracted the notice of all sides, and by writing against Luther led men to read Luther's writings. By publishing his celebrated work on the seven sacraments in defense of popery, and for which the Roman pontiff conferred on him the title of "Defender of the Faith," he brought forward the Romanist doctrines for examination. Luther seized the pen to

* History of the Council of Trent, by Father Paul, published in 1676.

defend his principles, and as if the high position of his royal adversary called forth his sharpest invective, his reply was not only convincing and forcible, but one of great severity.

In the mean time Luther's writings were fast spreading, not only over his own land, but throughout Europe. A great many of the Churches of Germany were taking important steps toward reform. Some were removing the pictures; some threw from their shrines the images; some were giving the cup to the laity; some abolishing auricular confession, and some doing all of these at once.

Luther returned from the Castle of Wartburg to Wittemburg, and notwithstanding the pope's anathema and charge to capture him, no one was found to execute the order.

While these events are passing we behold the justly renowned Melancthon commencing his career as a Reformer in the University of Wittemburg as Greek Professor. At this time (1521) he had been three years associated with Luther, and was now twenty-four years of age. Philip Melancthon was fourteen years younger than his great cotemporary, yet so tempered was he with mildness and caution, that he was just the person necessary to stand by the side of the impetuous Reformer in the war he waged against the doctrines of Romanism. There is no doubt but that Providence placed them together in this work. At the same time the zeal of Melancthon was always steadfast. His "Loci Theologici" opened the way to a clear exposition of the doctrines of the Reformers, and itself became a model to them. His name soon became known throughout Europe. He was invited to England, and even to France, by the persecuting Francis I.; but political reasons prevented him from

going to either country. It was Melancthon who drew up the Confession of Augsburg, and the apology for it. Sometimes he was accused of being too moderate, and sometimes suffered from Luther's vehemence; but when we consider the turbulence of the times, we can hardly overrate the value of such a spirit to the cause he advocated. He continued united with Luther in close bonds of friendship until they were broken by the death of the latter. Above all other praise is that accorded to Melancthon of being a pure-minded, humble, gentle, faithful Christian.

It was in this year also (1521) that John Bugenhagius, at the age of thirty-six, met with Luther's treatise on the Babylonish captivity.

“He is the most pestilent heretic that ever infested the Church of Christ,” he cried.

He took it up again and read it more attentively, and then said :

“The whole world is blind, walking in Cimmerian darkness ; this man alone sees the truth.”

He had received some first impressions from a tract written by Erasmus, but now avowed the principles of the reform so boldly that he was forced to leave his place of residence. He came to Wittemberg, where he became pastor of the Reformed Church, and continued at his post, preaching and writing, for thirty-six years.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DIET OF NUREMBERG — THE POPE URGES THE EXECUTION OF LUTHER.

THE printing-press now took up the works of the Reformers and spread them with great rapidity. It is wonderful how the number of religious publications increased after Luther's writings began to appear.

In Germany thirty-five publications were issued during the year 1513; in the year 1517, thirty-seven. But in the year 1518 there were seventy-one; in 1519, one hundred and eleven; in 1520, two hundred and eight; in 1521, two hundred and eleven; in 1522, three hundred and forty-seven; and in 1523, four hundred and ninety-eight. And these books were written almost all by Luther and his friends, and the majority published at Wittemburg.*

And they were carried by men whom we now call colporteurs into every corner of the empire; some of them were men who had once been monks and priests, who had read them until their own hearts were fired by their spirit; some were men who had worked upon their farms and at their trades, who for the love of Christ left their homes to spread the Gospel; and some who could not read themselves, sold them, and listened to their contents as they stopped a night on the road, or exhibited them in the open highway to some one more learned than themselves.

In the year 1522 the Diet of Nuremberg was held. It was now to be seen whether the edict of Worms

* D'Aubigné, vol. iii, p. 108.

would be enforced against Luther or not. The pope sent, as nuncio, Francisco Chieregati, to urge proceedings against the Reformers. Having arrived, he presented the pope's letters to the assembly, bearing date November 25, in which the holy father complained:

“That Martin Luther, having been condemned by the sentence of Leo, and the sentence executed in Worms by the emperor's decree, published throughout all Germany, he persevered notwithstanding in the same errors, continually publishing books full of heresies, and that he was favored not only by the meaner sort, but even by the nobles also.”

“He exhorteth the princes and people not to make show of giving any consent to so great an abomination by tolerating it any longer. He showed them that it was a most shameful thing to suffer themselves to be led out of the way of their ancestors by a poor, simple friar, as if only Luther were of understanding and wise. He advertiseth them that if Luther's followers have denied obedience to the ecclesiastical laws, much more will they esteem basely of the secular; and if they have usurped the goods of the Church, much less will they abstain from those of the laity; and having dared to lay their hands upon the priests of God, they will not spare the houses, wives, and children of them. He exhorteth them, if they cannot reduce Martin and his followers into the right way by fair means, to proceed to sharp and fiery remedies, to cut the dead members from the body, as anciently was done unto Dathan and Abiram, to Ananias and Sapphira, to Jovinian and Vigilantius; and finally, as their predecessors did against John Huss and Jerome of Prague, in the Council of Constance, whose

example, in case they cannot otherwise do, they ought to imitate.”*

To the good and great Elector of Saxony the pope addressed a special epistle, in which he said that the elector “should consider what blemish it would be to his posterity to have favored a frantic man, who put confusion into the world with impious and foolish inventions, turning upside down the doctrine established by the blood of the martyrs, labors of the holy doctors, and arms of the most valiant princes; that he should walk in the paths of his ancestors, not suffering his eyes to be dazzled by the fury of a petty companion, to follow errors condemned by so many councils.”

Having delivered his letters, the nuncio appeared in person before the diet, and urged them to proceed against “that pestilent doctrine of Luther.” For this he gave seven reasons:

“The *first*, because the worship of God and charity toward their neighbor moved them thereunto.

“*Secondly*. The infamy of their nation;” that is, the infamy of having allowed Luther’s sentiments to spread among them.

“*Thirdly*. Their own honor, showing themselves not to degenerate from their predecessors, who were present at the condemnation of John Huss in Constance, and of the other heretics, leading some of them to the fire, even with their own hands, and that they would not fail of their own promise and constancy, the greater part of them having approved the emperor’s edict against Luther.

“*Fourthly*. That the injury should move them which Luther had done to their progenitors, publishing another faith than that which they believed,

* Council of Trent, p. 28.

and concluding by consequence that they are all in hell.

“*Fifthly.* They ought to be moved by the mark which the Lutherans aim at, which is to weaken the secular power, after they have annihilated the ecclesiastical, by a false pretense that it is usurped against the Gospel, although they craftily make show to preserve the secular only to deceive them.

“*Sixthly.* That they should consider the dissensions and confusions raised in Germany by that sect.

“And, finally, he desireth them to observe that Luther treadeth in the same way that Mohammed did long ago.”

The nuncio, having thus delivered himself, proceeded to notice the state of Rome itself, and candidly acknowledged the wickedness of the Church in that city. He did this by authority of the pope, hoping it would conciliate the princes, and lead them to put confidence in the promises of the pontiff.

“Confessing that some years since some abominations have been committed even in that holy see, many abuses in spiritual things, many transgressions of the commandments, and lastly all things turned to the worst; so that it may be said that the infirmity is passed from the head to the members, from the popes to the inferior prelates, insomuch that there hath been none which hath done good, no, not one. For the amendment of which evil himself is resolved to employ all his wits, and use all diligence that the court of Rome, from whence, peradventure, all this mischief proceeded, should be reformed first of all; which he will the rather do because he seeth that all the world doth earnestly desire it. Notwithstanding that no man ought to marvel if he shall see that all the abuses be not suddenly amended; for the disease

being inveterated and multiplied, it is necessary to proceed slowly in the cure, and to begin from things of greatest weight, to avoid the confounding of all, by desiring to do all together.”*

Of the diet’s answer, which was in writing, and which was in effect its decree, we give portions at some length, as it was a most important document in this stage of the Reformation.

“Concerning the demand to execute the sentence given against Luther, and the edict of Worms, they answered that they were most ready to employ all their power to root out heresies; but that they had omitted to execute the sentence and edict for most weighty and urgent causes, in regard that the greater part of the people was persuaded by Luther’s books that the court of Rome had brought many grievances upon Germany; so that if anything had been done for execution of the sentence the multitude would have entered into suspicion that it was done to uphold and maintain the abuses and impiety, and popular tumults would have been raised, with danger of civil wars. Wherefore they said that in such difficulties more fitting remedies were necessary; especially himself, the nuncio, having confessed, in the pope’s name, that these evils proceeded from the sins of men, and promised a reformation of the court of Rome; the abuses whereof, if they were not amended, and the grievances removed, and some articles reformed, it was impossible to make peace between the ecclesiastics and seculars, and to extirpate the present tumults. And because Germany had consented to the payment of annates upon condition that they should be spent in the war against the Turks, they being paid so many years and never converted to

* Council of Trent, p. 24.

that use, they desired the pope that from henceforth the court of Rome might not be troubled to exact them, but that they might be left to the exchequer of the empire for the expenses of that war. And whereas his holiness demanded counsel of the means by which he might oppose himself to so great inconveniences, they answered that if the treaty were not of Luther only, but of rooting out altogether many errors and vices which by long custom and for divers respects have taken deep root, by some ignorantly, by others maliciously defended, they deemed no remedy more commodious, effectual, and opportune than if his holiness, by the emperor's consent, would call a godly, free, and Christian council, so soon as it were possible, in some convenient place in Germany, that is, in Argentine, in Mentz, Collen, or Metz; not deferring the convocation thereof above a year; granting power to every one, as well ecclesiastical as secular, to speak and give counsel for the glory of God and salvation of souls, any oath or obligation to the contrary notwithstanding. Which they, thinking that his holiness ought speedily to execute, and being desirous to make for the interim the best provision they were able, were resolved to treat with the Elector of Saxony that the Lutherans should neither write nor print any more; and that the preachers throughout all Germany should be silent in those things that might cause popular tumult, and should preach the holy Gospel sincerely and purely, according to the doctrine approved by the Church; not moving disputations, but reserving all controversies to the determination of the council. That the bishops should depute godly and learned men to be superintendents over the preachers, to inform and correct them, yet so as that no suspicion might be

given that it was done to hinder the truth of the Gospel ; that hereafter no new thing should be printed before it was seen and allowed by honest and learned men. Hoping by this means to provide against the tumults, if his holiness will take order against the grievance, and ordain a free and Christian council ; not doubting but that the tumults will so be quieted, and the greater part reduced to tranquillity. For undoubtedly all honest men would respect the determination of the council, when they saw that it was to be celebrated quickly.

“ Concerning married priests and religious men who returned to the world, they thought it sufficient if the ordinaries did impose upon them canonical punishments, because the civil laws had made no provision against them. But in case they commit any wickedness, that the prince or magistrate in whose territory they shall offend ought to give them their due chastisement.”*

This answer did not satisfy the pope’s nuncio, and he went on to reply to it. “ He said that to refrain from executing the decree against Luther to avoid scandals was not right, that they ought to esteem the salvation of souls more than worldly tranquillity ; and that Luther’s followers were by no means justified by any faults of the Court of Rome, but that they ought to bear with all patience whatever was amiss. And thereupon he entreated them to execute the sentence and edict before the diet ended. As to a council, he hoped that it would not displease his holiness if they had demanded it in more fitting terms, and therefore besought them to take away all those words that might give him any umbrage : as those, that the council might be called by the emperor’s consent ; and those

* Council of Trent, p. 26.

others, that the council might be celebrated rather in one city than another. For if they were not taken away it seemed they would bind his holiness's hands, a thing which could not produce any good effect. As to the preachers, he was anxious that the pope's decree might be observed, and that none should preach until his doctrine was examined by a bishop of the Church. This of course would silence completely all Luther's adherents. He said further that the answer of the diet as to the printers and publishers of books in no way pleased him ; that they ought to execute the sentence of the pope and emperor, to burn the books and punish the divulgars, earnestly advertising them that all consisted in this. That in reference to their payment of annuities he would say nothing ; his holiness would answer that in a convenient time. But for the married priests, the answer would not have displeased him had it not had a sting in the tail, where it was said that if they shall do any wicked thing they shall be punished by the princes and magistrates. For this would be against the liberty of the Church, and the sickle would be put into another man's field, and those men would be censured by the world who are reserved unto Christ."*

It is no wonder for another reason that the nuncio considered this clause as having a sting, for by saying they were to be punished for any wickedness by the magistrate or prince, it rather strongly implied that there was no real sin in the marriage of a priest.

The diet did not like this answer any better than the nuncio liked theirs, and after long discussion it was resolved to give no other.

After the nuncio had taken his departure the secular princes made a long complaint apart, reducing it to a

* Council of Trent.

hundred heads, which they called *centum gravamina*. These they sent to the pope, protesting that they neither would nor could endure them any longer, and that they were constrained by necessity and the iniquity of them to seek with all industry to free themselves from them, and by the most commodious ways they could.

In them they complained of the payment for dispensations and absolutions; of the money which was drawn from them by indulgences; of the suits in law which were drawn to Rome; of the reservation of benefices and the abuses of commendæs and annates; of the exemption of the ecclesiastics in offenses; of excommunications and unlawful interdicts; of lay causes drawn before the ecclesiastical judge by divers pretenses; of the great expenses in consecrating churches and church-yards; of pecuniary penance; of expenses to have the sacraments and the burial. All which were reduced to three principal heads: to inthrall the people, to rob them of their money, and to appropriate unto themselves the jurisdiction of the secular magistrate. Thus ended the Diet of Nuremberg.

CHAPTER XII.

THE INTERIM.

In a little while all these things were printed, the pope's instructions, the nuncio's speech, the replies, and the hundred grievances, and spread over Germany and other nations, and even to Rome itself. The candid confession of the pope, that all the mischief proceeded from the court of Rome and from the

ecclesiastical order, was not relished there, for they knew it would encourage their adversaries. They blamed the pope much for acknowledging it, and commended the wise policy of Leo X., who had attributed the bad opinion which Germany conceived of the manners of the court to the want of knowing it. But least of all did they like the attack upon their purses which the bold Germans had made.

The pope's confession, which was meant to conciliate, was no better received in Germany than in Rome, for the people said it was meant to lull them to sleep, and to gain time, so as to treat with their princes, and the better to bind the common people in their old chains. The pope's promise to remedy the abuses of the Church by degrees they treated as a joke, saying it was well said, step by step, if it had not been that a whole age was between one step and another.

Adrian VI. was almost too good for the position in which he was placed. He was called away from the embarrassments and cares which surrounded him almost as soon as he received the relation of his nuncio from Nuremberg. He died September 13, 1523.

How was the action of the diet now to affect the progress of the Gospel? Not unfavorably, for the Reformers, though forbidden to write and print, saw that their cause was defended by the princes, and they feared little their opposition in spreading their books. And as to preaching, each party interpreted the edict according to their own views. They were forbidden to preach those things which might cause popular tumult. The priests said they were not to preach of those things brought in by Luther, and of the reproofs which he had so forcibly dealt against them. The Protestants said they were not to speak of those abuses of their doctrine by the Anabaptists, with which their

adversaries had stirred up the people against them. And that part of the decree which commanded to preach the Gospel according to the doctrine of writers approved by the Church, the Romanists understood, according to the schoolmen; but the Lutherans said it was to be understood of the holy fathers, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, and the like.

The late pope being dead, Julio de Medicis was raised to the pontifical chair under the name of Clement VII. A man of far greater cunning and political management than Adrian, he set himself about the affairs of Germany. A diet was to assemble again in Nuremberg in three months, and he sent a legate with his instructions to appear before it. Lorenzo Campeggio, Cardinal of St. Anastasia, started in great hope that he would succeed better than the former nuncio in setting the good Germans right in their religious views. It would require too much space to detail the proceedings of this diet as fully as we have done the last. The legate urged them to put in execution the decree of Worms against the Lutherans. To burn and otherwise destroy all who differed from Rome they thought was the most effectual way to bring them back to the true mother Church. But the diet, not regarding this as a settled truth, would not grant their request, and no result was reached of importance. The Germans, however, reiterated their demands for a general council to be held in Germany.

After the diet had broken up, and the Protestant princes had left it, the legate brought together those who favored Rome in Ratisbon, and caused a decree to be made by them, that the edict of Worms against Luther should be put in execution as far as possible in all their dominions and states. That in the mass and sacraments no change should be made; and that

all apostates, monks, nuns, and married priests, and those who received the communion without confession, or ate forbidden meats, should be punished. And as the University of Wittemberg was a nest of heresy, they commanded all their subjects to depart from that place within three months. As this and other regulations which they pretended to make were legislating within the bounds of the princes who had been at Nuremberg, and were not at Ratisbon, it was hardly to be expected that the latter would receive the new decrees with a very warm welcome. The legate of the pope did not expect they would. He rather desired to satisfy his master than he did the Germans, and to convince him that he had made an arrangement which would prevent the necessity of a general council, to which the pope was extremely averse.

In the mean time there was another personage who had not been present at its session, who was little satisfied with the decree of Nuremberg. The Emperor Charles V. was at war with France, and desired greatly the influence of Clement in his favor. He therefore wrote to the princes reproving them sharply for presuming to give so positive an answer to a foreign potentate without his consent, commanding them to enforce the edict of Worms, and that if they wanted a general council it was his business to arrange it with the pope, and that all regulations in religious matters he and the holy father would attend to themselves.

The emperor's letters were more imperious than the Germans were accustomed to receive from his predecessors, and, in the quaint language of an old historian, "moved very dangerous humors in the minds of many princes, which, floating up and down, might easily have come to a troublesome conclusion."

The insurrections of the peasants, however, and the

wars consequent upon them in Germany; the battle of Pavia, and the capture by Charles of Francis I., King of France, in Italy, turned the minds of men in other directions.

It was not until the year 1526 that another diet was held. In June all the German states of the empire assembled in Spira. An event, however, which properly belongs to our subject, occurred the year before, which we will now notice.

In the year 1523 some nuns escaped from an Augustinian convent by concealing themselves in barrels. A careless spectator would have supposed there was passing him simply a load of empty barrels; but there were hearts there, weary of the gloomy life they had led, and now beating high with hopes of freedom. They were soon among friends, where they were comparatively safe. One of these escaped nuns was Catharine Von Bora, to whom Luther was married in June, 1525, he being at that time forty-two years of age and Catharine about twenty-six.

His enemies, and even some friends, have censured him for this step; but Luther was no doubt well convinced that there was no authority in the Scriptures requiring celibacy in a minister of God. Melancthon and Carlstadt were married in the year 1520.

In the year of Luther's marriage his friend and protector, the noble and powerful advocate of the Reformers' principles, Frederic of Saxony, died. He was succeeded by his brother John, a firm supporter also of their doctrines.

We return to the Diet of Spira, which was held, as we have said, in the year 1526, an assembly of more than ordinary importance to the Protestant cause. So many different interests were represented that for a long time it seemed impossible to come to any con-

clusion. There were the ministers of the emperor, there were the adherents of Luther, and there were the partisans of Rome. Their contentions ran so high that several of the princes prepared to leave the diet rather than yield to the demands of the ecclesiastics. The emperor's friends feared that their sittings would be broken up, and a civil war between the German states would be the consequence. They therefore yielded on their side in some things, and brought the others finally to settle on a decree which requested the emperor to provide for a council in Germany within a year, or a universal council of all Christendom within the same space; and that in the mean time all the princes and states should so govern in their provinces and jurisdictions that they might give a good account of their actions to God and the emperor.

This latter clause was the material part. It was called *the interim*, and gave the liberty to regulate religious matters according to the pleasure of each ruler. It became famous afterward, as it was a first step toward the religious liberty which the German princes afterward claimed.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NAME PROTESTANT — AUGSBURG CONFESION — LEAGUE OF SMALCALD — TRIUMPH OF THE REFORMERS.

We will not tarry at intermediate minor events, but pass to the second Diet of Spira, which was held in the year 1529. There severe edicts were passed against the Protestants, notwithstanding the opposi-

tion of the Elector of Saxony and of the princes favorable to him. Then an important era opens before us in the history of the German Reformation, an era which beholds a regularly organized opposition to papal aggression.

A formal protest was subscribed and published against the decrees of the diet. It was signed by John of Saxony, Ernest and Francis, dukes of Brunswick-Lunenberg, Wolfgang of Anhalt, George, margrave of Brandenberg, and Philip, landgrave of Hesse-Homberg. Several of the free towns of Germany soon declared their adhesion to them, including the great cities of Strasburg, Ulm, and Nuremberg. This protest appeared on the 19th day of April, 1529, and should be ever memorable as having been the source of that title which has come down to our times with increasing luster, the title of Protestant.

The pope now urges Charles to severity, saying that the edict of Worms should be executed without heeding anything that the Protestants could say; that all their excuses were only pretenses of impiety, and that he should use force against the first disobedience. Such a course, said he, is the only one suited to the emperor's office as advocate of the Church of Rome, and to the oath he had taken. It was better to proceed to force than let the reins loose to popular license, to the ambition of the grandees, and perverseness of the arch-heretics.

Charles determined to act according to the pontiff's advice, and to go personally into Germany and put an end to all religious opinions different from the orthodox, and, if need be, to the men holding them. It was a work a little too great both for the emperor and pope.

He appointed an imperial diet, to be held at Augs-

burg on the 8th of April, 1530, and set out himself to attend it in the March preceding, determined that his disobedient subjects should return to their obedience and to the arms of the holy mother Church, and that the troublesome heretic sermons and heretic books should be banished forever from the empire.

The pope appointed Cardinal Campeggio to represent him as legate, and Peter Paul Vergerius as special nuncio to Ferdinand, the emperor's brother, in Germany, with instructions to labor with him to prevent all disputations in the diet and all consultations concerning religion. The holy father found that these religious conferences at the diets were bringing out too much light, and that men thus got hold of too much of the Bible to remain good Catholics; and his idea was to compel them to believe just by pointing to the fagot and the block; and if they were not convinced by such strong arguments as these, it was useless to reason with them, and the surest and the quickest and the safest way was to make an end of them at once.

By way of gaining Ferdinand, Vergerius was authorized to allow Frederic to take a contribution from the clergy of Germany to help him in his war against the Turks, and to use the gold and silver ornaments of the churches for the same purpose. A very fair arrangement, no doubt, it seemed to the good father, to make the German priests pay for bayoneting Turks, as well as cutting the throats of Protestants.

In due time the emperor arrived at Augsburg. A grand procession took place on the following day, at which the Protestants did not appear, which the pope's legate regarded as an insult to his holiness.

The diet having commenced, a document was presented by the Elector of Saxony and other princes,

written by Melancthon, and containing the religious views of the Reformers. The emperor refused to have it read on that day, and it was put off until the next, when it was publicly read before the assembly. The pope's legate, however, would not be present. This paper was the celebrated Augsburg Confession, afterward so well known. The followers of Zwingle also presented their confession, which was in substance the same as the other, except in the doctrine of the sacrament.

Before any action was taken the emperor caused the Lutheran confession to be read by the legate, so that he might have his advice upon it. The latter found himself in a singular dilemma. He could not approve of it, and he hardly dared to say much against it for fear of fresh discussions in the diet, which he was greatly afraid of; and he told the emperor that there was such an itching of ears to hear, that by attempting to correct their errors the remedy would be worse than the disease. He at last came to the conclusion to have a confutation of their articles read, but not to give them any copies, for fear they should reply to it again; and that instead of arguments, the Protestants should be plied with threats and promises of favors. Melancthon, however, answered the legate's paper in what is known as the "Apology for the Augsburg Confession."

After much debate seven Roman Catholics were appointed and seven Protestants to confer together. They were not able to agree, and then the number was reduced to three on each side, who were equally unable to come to any conclusion. The princes were then urged separately and privately, but nothing could induce them to yield a single principle; and finally, seeing that the majority was against them, and

that the emperor was determined to put things to extremes, and unwilling by their presence to give any seeming countenance to the edict about to be passed, they left the diet.

The emperor then caused a decree to be passed altogether in favor of the Romish Church. Nothing was to be changed in the mass; the images should remain, and be restored where they had been taken away; that married priests should forsake their wives; that the people should be exhorted to hear mass, to pray to the Virgin Mary and other saints; that the monasteries and other sacred edifices which had been destroyed should be rebuilt, and that every one was to employ all his forces, possessions, life and blood, to preserve this decree, and that the imperial chamber proceed against whomsoever shall oppose it.

It was also resolved to request the pope to call a council in six months, to be held within a year.

It may be supposed that this decree would have satisfied the pope. But this was far from being the case. He bitterly complained that the confessions had been read at all, or that any conferences had been held to settle the religious differences. It was his business alone to do that. Every one else was to believe as he said; and if they did not, all that the emperor and princes had to do was to draw the sword and smite them.

But the worst of all was to ask him to call a council. It was assailing his dignity even to request him to do so. If a council was necessary he could call it himself, without any suggestion from the diet or emperor.

But it was done, and done by his friends, and it would seem like a fresh schism if he refused. So he issued a summons for a general council, exhorting

kings and princes to attend it; but that he might make sure that it could not be held without a further order from himself, he named no time or place for its meeting. As this was a material omission, men who had not great faith in the pope's sincerity regarded it as a kind of subterfuge.

In the mean time the Protestants were not idle. They saw their danger, and were resolved to provide, as far as possible, against it. Denying the authority of the emperor in matters of religion, they formed a solemn alliance at Smalcald to defend with their utmost vigor their religion and their liberties against the encroachments threatened by the decree of Augsburg; and to carry this into effect they agreed with each other to maintain an army to defend their opinions.

They next sent letters to the kings of France and England, whose replies encouraged them to hope for succor from them.

In the mean time accusations were brought against the Protestants, and sentences passed in several places against them; but public opinion was so strong in their favor that they were not executed. Besides, Charles was too much occupied in carrying on a war against the Turks to desire a civil war among his own people; and he feared that if he undertook to compel the united princes to obey the edict of Augsburg he would bring himself into collision with France and England. He was therefore disposed to yield, and on the 25th day of July of the following year (1531) he agreed to what is known as the pacification of Nuremberg, in which the previous severe edicts were annulled and the Protestants allowed to use their own ceremonial of devotion, and to profess publicly the Reformed religion.

This was a triumphant day for Luther and his friends, a day in which they saw the principles for which they had so long and so earnestly struggled legally recognized and sanctioned in their country.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE POPE TREATS WITH LUTHER.

In the year 1534 Clement VII. died, and was succeeded by Paul III., a pope who was said to have had many virtues, and who himself, among them all, esteemed his own powers to dissemble the greatest. He made up his mind that he would not appear to be so much afraid of a council as Clement had been. He went to work earnestly to calm the storms which had rendered so uneasy the seat of his predecessor.

One of his first acts was to bring Vergerius from Germany, to ascertain exactly how matters stood in that country. Sending him back, he told him to see Luther and the other Reformers, and by persuasions and promises to bring them to Rome. It was a remarkable step for the pope to take, thus to treat with the humble friar. We will see with what success.*

Vergerius found Luther at Wittemberg, and addressing him with great respect, went on to deliver his message from the pope. He told him that the pope and college of cardinals esteemed him exceedingly, and were infinitely grieved at the loss of one who, if he had been employed in the service of God and the apostolical see, (which, said the subtle nun-

* Council of Trent, pp. 68-70.

cio, are joined together,) might have brought forth inestimable fruit; and that they would do whatsoever they could to regain him. He said that the pope blamed Cajetan for his rigor, and the cardinals censured him also. Even the pope, Leo X., was to be condemned for the same thing. He did not wish to dispute with him as to the controversies in question, because he professed not divinity; but common reason was sufficient to convince him that it was good to reunite himself to the head of the Church: for his doctrines, which had come to light and been published within eighteen years, had already raised innumerable sects, who detested each other, and so many popular seditions, with the death and banishment of so great multitudes, that it could not be supposed it came from God. He might well assure himself that it was pernicious to the world when so much evil came from it. "And," continued Vergerius, "it was too great a self-love, and too great a conceit of one's own worth, for a man to trouble the whole world in sowing his own opinions. If you have made an innovation on the faith in which you were born, and brought up for thirty-five years, for your conscience and salvation's sake, it was sufficient to keep it within yourself. If the love of your neighbor moved you, why did you trouble the whole world unnecessarily, seeing that without it men did live, and God was served in tranquillity?

"The confusion has gone so far," said he, "that the remedy cannot be deferred. The pope is resolved to apply it by calling a council. That he is a munificent prince, and takes special notice of persons of merit; and that if Luther would come into the bosom of the Church again, the holy father would grant him distinguished honors, and he would stand a good chance

of being a cardinal, or perhaps pope." What a thought! Luther a pope! And what a temptation, after all the cares and perplexities through which he had passed!

The Reformer replied with the vehemence which was natural to him. He said he made no account of the esteem which came from the court of Rome. He feared not their hatred, nor regarded their good-will, but applied himself to the service of God as much as he could, though when he had done all he was but an unprofitable servant; that he saw not how the services of God were joined with those of the papacy, but as darkness with light; that nothing in all his life was more profitable to him than the rigor of Leo and Cajetan, which he could not ascribe to them, but to the providence of God. For not being as yet in those times illuminated in all the truth of Christian faith, but having only discovered the abuses of indulgences, he was ready to have kept silence in case his adversaries had done the like. But the writings of the master of the holy palace, the insulting of Cajetan, and the rigor of Leo constrained him to study and to descry many other less tolerable abuses and errors of the papacy, which he could not, with a good conscience, refrain from declaring to the world. That the nuncio had ingenuously confessed that he understood not divinity, which appeared clearly by what he said; because as to its doctrine being new no one could call it so but he that believed that Christ, the apostles, and the holy fathers lived as now the pope, cardinals, and bishops do. Neither can any argument be drawn against the doctrine from the seditions happened in Germany, but by him that hath not read the Scriptures, and knoweth not that this is proper to the word of God and the Gospel, that it stirreth up troubles

and tumults even to the separation of the father from the son wheresoever it is preached. That this was the virtue of it—to give life to them that hearken to it, and to bring greater damnation to whosoever rejecteth it.

Many other things Luther said in his reply,* asserting at the close that the nuncio, yea, the pope himself would sooner embrace his faith than he would abandon it. Vergerius tried some of the other Protestant preachers, but met with the same result from them.

We may judge it was not a hasty or partial attempt which the nuncio made to move the Reformers, for he did not return to Rome until the year 1536. Then he gave an account of his embassage to the pope, assuring him that there was no hope at all of Luther and his accomplices, except to oppress them with war. The pope sent him to the emperor to incite him to that righteous work, but the latter was not ready yet to proceed to extremities.

CHAPTER XV.

LUTHER'S DEATH.

THROUGH various vicissitudes the Reformers struggled without coming to open hostilities with their adversaries until the year 1546. This was an eventful year. It witnessed Luther's death. It witnessed the famous Council of Trent fully organized, having formally opened in 1545; and resulting from it, the commencement of a bloody war between the Protestants and their relentless foes.

* Council of Trent.

The religious hero of Germany had grown infirm. Though but sixty-three years of age, cares beyond the ordinary lot of men had fallen to his share. Study, toil, and anxiety had made great inroads upon a constitution once so strong.

Early in 1546 he came to Eisleben, his native place, to settle some disputes between the noblemen of that place. Here he was received with great pomp, but was soon taken sick, and it became evident to others and to himself that his recovery was doubtful. On the 16th of February he said to one of his friends :

“Here I was born and baptized; what if I should remain to die here also.”

On the 18th of the same month, only two days afterward, he died. Just before he lost his speech he prayed aloud in these words :

“O my heavenly Father, God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all consolation, I thank thee for having revealed to me thy well-beloved Son, in whom I trust, whom I have acknowledged and preached and loved; but whom the pope, and they who have no religion, persecute and oppose. To thee, O Jesus Christ, I commend my soul. I am casting off this earthly body and passing from this life; but I know that with thee I shall abide eternally.”

Death approached, finding in him the same firm faith which he had preached, and a sure and steadfast hope of eternal life.

He then repeated three times the words :

“Into thy hands I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O God of truth!”

One said to him :

“Dearest father, do you verily confess Jesus Christ the Son of God, our Saviour and Redeemer?”

Making a great effort, he replied, in a tone loud enough to be heard by all around him:

“Yes.”

This was his last word. In the language of an eloquent writer: “The coldness of death gathered on his face and forehead; his breath came heavily, and with eyes closed and his hands clasped, he remained apparently unconscious of what passed around him, until, between two and three o’clock, the tide of mortal life ebbed back, leaving the mighty spirit landed in eternity.”

Perhaps no one felt Luther’s death more than Melancthon, who has been called the greatest of his surviving associates. He burst into tears when the sad tidings were conveyed to him, exclaiming, in the language of Elisha: “My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.”

CHAPTER XVI.

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT—BATTLE OF INSPRUCK— TREATY OF PASSAU.

In the year 1545 a council of the Church assembled to settle the differences of opinion which agitated the world. The Protestants refused to participate in it because it was to be held at Trent, a place within the jurisdiction of the pope. They had insisted upon its being held in some other city. Long had a general council been talked of, and now it was to be seen whether peace should come from it, as was anticipated, or not. Almost as soon as it met, decrees were promulgated against the Reformers, and the

pope and the emperor resolved on the utter extirpation of all who refused conformity to them, and an army was raised to reduce them to obedience.

The Protestant princes flew to arms. It was their only remaining refuge. They attacked the emperor's camp at Ingoldstadt; but in consequence of divisions, and the failure of France in paying the subsidy which she had promised, they were soon obliged to abandon their position. The heroic John Frederic, Elector of Saxony, betrayed by his nephew Maurice, Duke of Saxony, was obliged to direct his march homeward. The emperor, Charles V., pursued him closely, so that he might destroy his army before he could recover his vigor. He overtook him near Muhlberg, on the Elbe; and on the 24th day of April, 1547, a bloody action took place between them. The Protestant army was completely routed, and the Elector of Saxony, who had so long and ably defended their cause, was taken prisoner. The brave and courageous Landgrave of Hesse, the other principal Protestant leader, was persuaded to throw himself on the mercy of the emperor, and to implore his pardon. Charles had promised that if he did so he should be restored to liberty; but notwithstanding his promise, he was basely detained a prisoner.

Maurice was declared Elector of Saxony.

The prospects of true religion were now gloomy enough. The Protestants seemed to be subdued, and their enemies triumphed.

Relief came, however, from a quarter which was not expected. Maurice, now Elector of Saxony, began to think that the Emperor Charles had conceived designs against the liberties of the German princes. He determined to take effectual measures to crush them; and entering into an alliance with the King

of France, and a number of the German princes, with great secrecy and expedition he raised a powerful army ; and in the year 1552 he marched against Charles, who was at Innspruck, expecting no foe, and attacked and completely defeated him.

In this struggle the King of France, though a Roman Catholic prince, rendered great service to the Protestant cause ; so much so that he received the title of "Protector of the German liberty, and avenger of the captive princes."

It was as a consequence of this battle that the treaty of Passau was concluded, which is considered the foundation of the religious liberty of the German Protestants.

By this treaty it was agreed that the contending parties should enjoy the free exercise of their religion, until a diet assembled, which was to be in six months, and that this religious liberty should continue always, if it should be found impossible to agree as to doctrines and worship.

The diet proposed was delayed by various circumstances until the year 1555, when it met at Augsburg.

On the 25th day of September it was enacted, "that the Protestants who followed the Confession of Augsburg should be for the future considered as entirely free from the jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff, and from the authority and superintendence of the bishops; that they were left at perfect liberty to enact laws for themselves relating to their religious sentiments, discipline, and worship; that all the inhabitants of the German empire should be allowed to judge for themselves in religious matters, and to join themselves to that Church whose doctrine and worship they thought the most pure and consonant with the spirit of true Christianity; and that

all those who should injure or prosecute any persons under religious pretenses, and on account of their opinions, should be declared and proceeded against as public enemies of the empire, invaders of its liberty, and disturbers of its peace."

Thus in the year 1555 religious liberty became triumphant, and from this time we may date one of the signal victories of the great Reformation in Germany.

As we come to this successful result of the Reformers' labors, and look back and behold the struggles which their religious liberty has cost them, we rejoice at this day in one thing, *they have never since given up the Bible*. While we mourn over the present coldness of the national Church, and cannot deny the obscurity which has come upon those great doctrines for which Luther contended, yet the Germans still cling to the Bible. Their fathers suffered, and shed their blood for the right to read it, and *they have never forgotten the lesson which they learned*. Commencing with childhood, they teach their children to read, perhaps, more universally than any other nation of Europe; and there is no restriction to the word of God. All may read it, and multitudes do so; and multitudes who are the countrymen of Luther have been led to Christ, even in our own country, and are now faithful witnesses to the truth.

CHAPTER XVII.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS.

THERE are some events subsequent to, yet so intimately connected with the Reformation in Germany, that they seem to form part of it.

Seventy-five years after the last-named Diet of Augsburg, notwithstanding the victory which the Reformation had achieved, and notwithstanding about seventy years' peaceable enjoyment of their religion, the Protestants of Germany seemed to have lost everything before the victorious and cruel Tilly except Magdeburg.

The next year that city also fell with horrible slaughter into the hands of the ferocious conqueror, now an old man of seventy years, who, when implored by his own officers to have mercy on the unresisting citizens, told them to return in an hour, and said coolly that "the soldier must have something for his labor and danger." In less than half an hour the work of blood was at its height. The furious soldiers spared neither age nor sex.

Three or four days after the carnage Tilly rode slowly through the city, gloating on the heaps of dead bodies with which the streets were covered.

Was the work of the Reformers then lost? Did Luther, Melancthon, Erasmus, and thousands of pious Christians live in vain for Germany? No; not if the great work had stopped where it then was, for great numbers had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and were already safely home in heaven.

But a deliverer was at hand in this hour of extreme peril for the truth of God.

Gustavus Adolphus, the renowned King of Sweden, had been long watching the struggles of his suffering brethren with intense interest. He at last determined to leave his kingdom and march to their assistance.

Entering the Senate-house at Stockholm on the 20th of May, 1630, he bade farewell to his countrymen. He had already taken every precaution to

leave his kingdom in safety in case he should never return ; and as he took his little daughter Christina in his arms, he made the nobles swear fidelity to her if he should perish. As he proceeded with his parting address, his emotion was so great that he was obliged to pause for some time, while the whole assembly was bathed in tears.

“ It is not lightly,” said he, “ or without due deliberation, that I involve myself and you in this new and dangerous war. Almighty God is my witness that I fight not for my own pleasure. The emperor has offered me, in the person of my ambassador, the grossest insults ; he has assisted my enemies, my friends and brethren he persecutes, tramples my religion in the dust, and stretches out his hand to seize my crown. The oppressed people of Germany urgently implore our aid, and, if it please God, they shall not be disappointed. I know the dangers to which my life will be exposed : these I have never shunned, nor do I hope eventually to escape them. It is true, that until the present hour the Almighty hath marvelously preserved me ; but I shall die at last in defense of my native land. I commend you all to the protection of heaven. Be upright, be conscientious, walk unblamably, so shall we meet one another again in eternity. To you, my counselors, I first address myself. May God enlighten you, and fill you with wisdom, that you may ever advise that which conduces most to the welfare of my kingdom. You, brave nobles, I commend to the protection of God. Go forth and prove yourselves worthy descendants of those heroic Goths who laid ancient Rome in the dust. You, ministers of the Church, I exhort to unanimity and concord. Be yourselves ensamples of those virtues which ye preach, and

abuse not your dominion over the souls of my people. To you, deputies of the burgher and peasant orders, I wish the blessing of heaven, a joyful harvest to reward your toils, fullness to your barns, and abundance of all the good things of life. For all, absent as well as present, I offer my prayers to heaven. I now bid you affectionately farewell—farewell, perhaps forever!"

On the 24th of June, 1630, Gustavus landed at Usedom. His brave Swedes were the most formidable soldiers of the time, thoroughly disciplined, experienced in battle, and their hearts fired with the thought that they were fighting for God and their oppressed brethren.

As soon as they landed in Germany their king fell upon his knees and implored the help of God in his undertaking. His army consisted of only sixteen thousand men, and the Protestants hailed his arrival with great joy, and called him the "Lion of the North." But at Vienna they regarded him with contempt, and named him in derision the "Snow King," because they said he would melt away as he approached the south. It was soon to be decided which was right.

Gustavus Adolphus advanced to Berlin, where he made a treaty with George William, the elector, and eighteen thousand Saxons joined the Swedes. Thence he marched to Leipsic, where the Imperial and Swedish armies met. The difference between them was extremely striking, as is shown by the following description :

"In the camp of Gustavus religious service was regularly performed, sometimes to the army in general, on which occasions the king was always present; sometimes by the chaplain of each regiment to those more immediately intrusted to his charge. The kindness

with which the Swedish soldiers treated the unarmed citizens and peasants, the strict morality of their lives, and the gentleness of their manners, rendered them universally objects of respect and love, and presented a striking contrast to the fearful oaths and shouts of licentious revelry with which Tilly's camp resounded day and night, and to the cruelties practiced by his soldiers on the defenseless inhabitants."

On the 7th of September, 1631, the battle commenced, from which it appears that Gustavus had been over a year already in Germany. This time had been principally employed in making suitable preliminary arrangements with the Protestant princes.

The Swedish soldiers wore no armor, so that they might be prepared for rapid movements, and had with them only a light train of field artillery. The imperialists wore cuirasses, greaves, and helmets, and relied much on their heavy ordnance.

Gustavus Adolphus, dressed in a simple gray surtout, with a white hat and gray feather, rode in front of the line and exhorted his men to fight bravely. They were arranged in separate bodies, while Tilly's army was formed in one long line, with his artillery on a hill just behind him.

And now the fate of Protestant Germany appeared to rest on this eventful day. The scene of carnage opened with a cannonade which wrapped everything in smoke and fire, and continued about two hours. Tilly then, leaving his position on the hills, marched against the right wing of the Swedes. Turned aside by their destructive fire, he poured impetuously on the Saxons, who soon fled in confusion.

While fortune seemed thus turning against the army of Gustavus, the redoubtable Pappenheim, at the head of his terrible cuirassiers, charged the

Swedes. They were firm against the shock as the ground they stood upon. Again rallying, they rushed impetuously upon the northern heroes, but were again repulsed. Irritated, and accustomed to see everything yield before them, they formed the third time, and the third time were obliged to fall back. Thus six times they endeavored to break the ranks of the courageous Swedes. The seventh time they advanced, maddened by their ill success, and by the thought of all their former victories, determined to overwhelm their foemen. The Swedes received them with the same unflinching courage. They were repulsed the seventh time, but as soon as their ranks broke the order was given to advance, and the Swedes drove them before them with great loss. Pressing on to the heavy artillery of the Imperialists, they seized it, and immediately turned it against Tilly, who was pursuing the Saxons. Then attacking Tilly on the side next to them, they threw him into irrecoverable confusion.

The Imperial army was soon almost annihilated. Four regiments of veterans, gray in the service, resolved to be cut in pieces rather than yield, and fought desperately until night came on. Tilly, now seventy-two years of age, who had never before been defeated, and never wounded, stood his ground, as if determined not to leave the field. He had received three bullets in his body, and was on the point of being slain by a Swedish officer when he was rescued, and then fled. All along his route his defeat was celebrated by a song, the chorus of which was, "Fly, Tilly, fly," and everywhere this chorus, sung by hundreds of voices, reached his ears.

After this victory the country people rose in a mass, and joined the army of Gustavus in great num-

bers. Now the banks of the Neckar and the Rhine resounded with shouts of joy as the army of the liberator advanced, and wherever they went the hand of fellowship was extended to the Swedes.

Again Tilly rallied, took the town of Rotenburg, and entrenched himself in a strong position on the river Lech. Gustavus soon advanced to the opposite bank, and during three days kept up a constant cannonade. Then for the first time the Imperialists beheld a bridge which the Swedes had constructed under cover of the smoke, over which a large portion of their army had already crossed. In a transport of rage Tilly rushed forward to meet them, but a cannon ball struck his thigh, producing a wound of which he soon afterward died.

The celebrated and infamous Wallenstein succeeded Tilly in the command of the Imperial troops, who, by his personal influence and his immense private resources, soon succeeded in raising a formidable army. The two armies met near the village of Lützen on the 6th of November.

In front of the Swedish line Gustavus knelt down before his soldiers, and prayed to the God of battles for success. The whole army then sang Luther's battle hymn, "A steadfast fortress is our God," the field music of the different regiments playing the accompaniment. The king then mounted his horse and rode through the ranks encouraging his soldiers. The battle-cry of the Swedes was, "God with us;" that of the Imperialists, "Jesu—Maria."

We will give a description of this battle, so important to the Protestant cause in Germany, in the words of one from whom we have already quoted:

"The fog in some measure dispersing about eleven o'clock, the two armies began to be visible to each

other, and at the same moment the village of Lützen was discovered to be in flames, having been set on fire by order of the Duke of Friedland, lest he should be outflanked on that side. Half an hour later Gustavus gave the signal of attack, and the Swedish infantry rushed forward to carry the trenches; but a murderous fire of artillery and small arms compelled them to retreat. The voice of Gustavus soon rallied them, and they fought with great fury, but without making any impression on the Imperialists, until Colonel Winkel, with a regiment of cavalry, forced his way across two of the trenches, followed by the Swedish body-guard. The battery was soon carried, and the guns turned against the Imperialists, then re-taken by Wallenstein, and again carried by the Swedes, whose right wing was everywhere victorious; but their left, galled by the heavy fire from the wind-mill battery, was beginning to give way, when Gustavus rode forward for the purpose of rallying them. The swiftness of his horse rendering it impossible for the heavy cavalry to keep pace with their leader, he soon found himself almost alone in the midst of the enemy. Here a subaltern of the Imperial army, observing the respect with which the unknown officer was treated by his few followers, naturally concluded that he was a person of importance, and called out to a musketeer, 'Shoot that man, for I am sure that he is an officer of high rank.' The soldier immediately fired, and the king's left arm fell powerless by his side. At this moment a wild cry was raised: 'The king bleeds, the king is wounded.' 'It is nothing,' shouted Gustavus, 'follow me.' But the pain soon brought on faintness, and he desired the Duke of Lauenburg, in French, to lead him out of the throng. While the duke was endeavoring to withdraw him without being

noticed by the troops, a second shot struck Gustavus, and deprived him of his little remaining strength. 'I have enough, brother,' he said in a feeble voice to the duke; 'try to save your own life.' At the same moment he fell from his horse, and in a short time breathed his last. His horse, bathed in blood, and galloping wildly about the field, gave the first intimation to the Swedish cavalry that their king had fallen. A furious struggle for the recovery of his remains then took place between them and the Croatians, and the disfigured corpse of Gustavus was soon buried beneath a heap of dead. Meanwhile the sorrowful tidings had reached the main body, and goaded the Swedes almost to desperation. They fought with a fury which nothing could resist, and the enemy was already retreating when Pappenheim appeared, and the battle began afresh. Nothing could exceed the fierceness of this second engagement. The Swedish yellow regiment, the flower of their army, lay dead, each man in his rank, without having yielded an inch of ground. Count Piccolomini, one of the imperial generals, had seven horses shot under him, and received six wounds, but would not quit his post until the battle was decided. Wallenstein rode through the field like one bearing a charmed life; right and left his attendants and his cloak were pierced through and through with bullets; yet he escaped unwounded, to fall at last by the hand of an assassin.

"Pappenheim received two shots in his breast and was carried out of the battle. While they were conveying him to the rear a rumor reached him that his great rival was slain. The countenance of the dying man brightened at this intelligence. 'Tell the Duke of Friedland,' he said, 'that I lie here without hope of life, but I die in peace, knowing that the

enemy of my faith has also fallen.' The mists of evening put an end to the fight. So little were the Swedes aware of the advantage which they had gained, that the question of an immediate retreat was seriously discussed between Bernard of Saxe Weimar and General Kniphausen ; and great was their surprise when the light of morning made them aware that Wallenstein had withdrawn his troops and left them masters of the field.

"But the victory was dearly purchased. More than nine thousand men lay dead on the field of battle ; the whole plain, from Lützen to the canal, was strewed with the wounded and the dying.

"But the most melancholy feature of the Swedish triumph was the loss of him who had died to achieve it.

"Thus fell, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, Gustavus Adolphus, the great protector of Protestantism in Germany."

Bernard of Saxe Weimar succeeded Gustavus in command of the Swedes.

"The war in which Gustavus Adolphus defended the Protestant cause, known as the Thirty Years' War, was finally terminated by the peace of Westphalia, signed October 24, 1648, which established the relative claims of the Catholic and Protestant parties on a basis which has remained almost undisturbed to the present day."

CHAPTER XVIII.

TWO ERRORS.

We have now gone over a ground which has been considered more in detail by different historians, and we will devote a few pages to two important errors of Luther, which, we doubt not, seriously retarded the great work in which he was engaged.

Luther erred in contending so vehemently in favor of his doctrine of consubstantiation. To say that the body and blood of Christ was literally present with the bread and wine in the communion was not far from Romanism. To hold this doctrine, as Luther did, is not what we complain of, but harshly to oppose those who, in the grand points of the Reformation, agreed with him, is what we condemn. Thus Luther opposed Zwingle, the great Reformer of Switzerland. Thus he opposed Carlstadt, and his language could not be otherwise but prejudicial to the cause for which he had so bravely fought. It is strange that such a mind as his did not see this, and lay controversies aside, to fight with more effect the common adversary. It is answered, that the darkness of the times is Luther's excuse; that it is wonderful he did as much as he did. This is true, but should not lead any one to conceal the truth. We may love the memory of the man. We will be thankful to God for all he accomplished, but at the same time we will try to learn a lesson at the point where he erred.

But this is not all. We hesitate not to state that Luther erred in his controversy with Erasmus, of whom we have spoken fully in the history of the

Reformation in England. D'Aubigné, as the exponent of a Calvinistic theology, condemns Erasmus, and eulogizes Luther in every point. Too many before D'Aubigné, of like sentiments, have joined in a kind of hue and cry against Erasmus. We admit that he was timid. We admit that he quailed sometimes at the thought of committing himself fully to the cause of the Reformation; but we cannot admit that the great and learned Erasmus was the base coward he is represented.

It was through Erasmus that the New Testament in Greek had been circulated in the colleges and among the learned men of all Europe. It was the "Colloquies" of Erasmus which had done such execution among all classes against Romanism. It was of Erasmus that men said, that he laid the egg that Luther hatched. It was of Erasmus that they asserted in Paris, he picked the lock which Luther opened. And now it is asserted* that he went to work to oppose the Reformation because he was fond of glory and desired notoriety; that "a capacious genius, and the greatest reputation of the age were wanted to oppose the Reformation," and that "Erasmus answered the call."

We cannot think thus. Erasmus said himself, "It is possible that Erasmus, by writing against you, will be of more service to the Gospel than certain dunces who write for you, and who do not permit him to be a simple spectator of this tragedy."

He saw that Luther was in error on the subject of predestination, and in the year 1525 published his celebrated "Dissertation on the Freedom of the Will." The reader will get some idea of his views, and those of Luther, from short extracts. Erasmus says:

* D'Aubigné, vol. iii, p. 277.

"Some think that man can neither will nor commence, and still less perform any good work without the special and continual aid of divine grace; and this opinion seems probable enough. Others teach that man's will is powerless, except for evil, and that it is grace alone which works in us any good; and finally, there are some who assert that there has never been any free-will either in angels, or in Adam, or in us, either before or after grace; but that God works in man both good and evil, and that everything happens from an absolute necessity."

Erasmus took the first of these positions; but D'Aubigné says* he made use of arguments which confuted it, and which the most decided Pelagian might employ. And this because he quoted passages of Scripture in which God offers man the choice between good and evil, and because from these passages Erasmus argues as follows: "Man must, therefore, have the power to will and to choose; for it would be ridiculous to say to any one, Choose, when it was not in his power to do so." Is not Erasmus right in this proposition? We think Erasmus was nearly correct, both in his position and in the argument cited, and that man, by the grace of God, has the power to choose.

Luther replied, asserting that man had no free-will in reference to God. He might have a free-will in relation to the things of this life, to manage his farm, his house, and all temporal things; but in the things of salvation he had none. He cited triumphantly the passage of our Saviour, "Without me ye can do nothing;" and harshly taunted Erasmus with having tried to overthrow it, when, in fact, he had employed almost these very words in the position which he

* Hist. of the Reformation, vol. iii, p. 280.

took, that man cannot will, commence, or perform a good work without divine grace.

D'Aubigné says, "Erasmus was vanquished." We think the able historian would have judged otherwise if he had not been born and educated in the Calvinistic theology. We assert, moreover, that if Luther had continued as he commenced, and urged men to repentance and holiness, and told them, as Erasmus did, that, by the aid of God's Spirit, they had the power to choose, and must choose, the Reformation would have spread still wider over Germany. And that another effect would also have taken place: that men who had broken loose from Romanism would have been less engaged in controversies concerning election, and predestination, and reprobation, and more zealous to fulfill the laws of God, and enjoy holiness of heart.

A late writer says: "The monk of Wittemburg," that is, Luther, "was at first a warm friend and admirer of the great scholar; but finding that the liberal spirit of Erasmus was not ready to adopt the extreme tenets of the Reformers, he at first expostulated with, then ridiculed, and then denounced his former friend as a time-server, a coward, and a foe to true religion."*

Luther, however, accomplished the great and glorious work for which he was eminently fitted. We admire his character, his courage, his decision; but candor requires that we should not conceal his imperfections.

* New American Cyclop., Art., Erasmus.

THE
REFORMATION IN FRANCE.



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CHAPTER I.

RELIGIOUS LIGHT IN FRANCE BEFORE THE REFORMATION—HER EARLY MARTYRS FOR CHRIST.

LONG before the time of Luther, France promised much in favor of true religion.

In the first place, she believed she was not bound body and soul to the pope, but that she had certain rights which could not be trampled upon ; these were denominated the liberties of the Gallican Church, and for these she earnestly contended.

In the second place, the kings of France had repeatedly assumed a noble independence in defiance of the pope. Philip-le-Bel, in defense of the rights of France, actually caused Boniface VIII. to be arrested in the midst of his states by a few soldiers, under the Chancellor Nogaret. On one occasion the King of France, having at his disposal a sufficient number of votes of the sacred college to elect the pope, offered the tiara to a French bishop, on condition that he should reside in France. The delighted prelate fell into the snare, was elected, and Avignon became the pope's residence for seventy years instead of Rome. Clement V. and his successors found themselves by this step in the power of the kings of France, and for many years the popes were only

instruments in the hands of the French monarchs. This was called the seventy years' captivity, and was one of the greatest blows which Romanism received previous to the Reformation.

In the third place, for centuries before the Reformation there were multitudes in France who advocated the doctrines of the Bible.

On this point we will dwell more at large. It is true that all through the dark ages there were many witnesses of Christ in all nations who protested against the practices of the Roman Catholic Church; but in France these witnesses appear to have been particularly numerous.

There was Berengarius, archbishop of Angiers. There was Nicholas de Lyra, of whom it was said,

“Si Lyra non lyrasset,
Lutherus non saltasset.”*

There was Peter Bruis. There was Henry, of Toulouse; and there were the Waldenses and Albigenses, whose existence in France could be traced back five or six centuries before the Reformation. Some suppose the Waldenses took their rise from

Peter Waldo, who flourished in the twelfth century; but this is probably a mistake. Waldo was one of their disciples; but they existed previously, and the name itself is found in an ancient confession of their faith before his time, brought to light by Pictetus. Crantz (in his history of the United Brethren) says that they date their origin from the fourth century, when one Leo, under Constantine the Great, opposed Sylvester, the Bishop of Rome. Reinerius, a Roman Catholic historian, says that some averred their existence to be from the time of Sylvester; others, from

* If Lyra had not made the music, Luther would not have danced.

the very time of the apostles. M. Sismondi, in his history of the Crusades against the Albigenses, says: "Those very persons who punished the sectaries with frightful torments have taken it upon themselves to make us acquainted with their opinions, allowing at the same time that they had been transmitted in Gaul (France) from generation to generation, almost from the origin of Christianity."

Their doctrines were those which are now generally called evangelical. A Roman Catholic writer says that their first error was affirming that the Roman Catholic Church was not the Church of Christ; and that they rejected images, crosses, relics, auricular confessions, indulgences, absolutions, clerical celibacy, masses, prayers for the dead; purgatory, invocation to saints and to the Virgin Mary, holy water, extreme unction, confirmation, processions, and such things.

As to their morality, an ancient inquisitor, who is of course their enemy, says: "These heretics are known by their manners and conversation, for they are orderly and modest in their behavior and deportment. They avoid all appearance of pride in their dress. They neither indulge in finery, nor are they mean and ragged. They avoid commerce, that they may be free from deceit and falsehood. They get their livelihood by manual industry. They are not anxious about amassing riches, but content themselves with the necessaries of life. They are chaste, temperate, and sober. They abstain from anger. Even when they work, they either learn or teach." Seisselius, archbishop of Turin, admits that, "their heresy excepted, they generally live a purer life than other Christians."

Reinerius, already quoted, gives one cause of their great increase as follows: .

“ All of them, men and women, night and day, never cease from teaching and learning. The first lesson which the Waldenses teach those whom they bring over to their party is to instruct them what manner of persons the disciples of Christ ought to be; and this they do by the doctrine of the evangelists and apostles, saying that those only are the followers of the apostles who imitate their manner of life.”

These were the Christians who preserved and spread the doctrines of the Reformation in France. But it must not be supposed they did so in quiet. Fierce and bloody persecutions were constantly their lot.

About the year 1228 such numbers of them were seized that the Archbishops of Aix, Arles, and Narbonne took compassion on them, and thus expressed themselves to the inquisitors :

“ We hear that you have apprehended such a number of Waldenses that it is not only impossible to defray the charge of their food and confinement, but to provide lime and stone to build prisons for them.”

In the year 1400 great numbers of them were murdered, and multitudes driven into the Alps in the depth of winter, where they were frozen to death.

In the year 1487, or, according to Fox, 1488, Pope Innocent VIII. set on foot a persecution against them. He sent the Archdeacon of Cremona to France, who, on arriving in Dauphine, obtained the assistance of the king's lieutenant. They marched a body of troops to the Valley of Loyse. There they found, however, that the inhabitants, hearing of their approach, had deserted their dwellings, and had fled to the caves and mountains. They pursued them like beasts of prey, throwing them headlong down the precipices, or slaughtering them in whatever way their ferocity dictated. Many, however, took refuge in caverns,

where they were able to elude their murderous pursuers by knowing the intricate windings of these places of their concealment. The archdeacon and lieutenant, not being able to reach them, caused the mouths of the caves to be filled with fagots, which being lighted, the unfortunate Waldenses within were suffocated.

On searching the caves multitudes of men and women were found dead. Four hundred infants were discovered who had been smothered in their cradles by the smoke, or clasped in their mothers' arms. About three thousand men, women, and children were destroyed in this persecution.

Louis XII., who has been called "the father of his people," came to the throne of France in the year 1498. While the unrelenting Romanists were carrying on their persecutions in Dauphine, the Waldenses petitioned him for redress. Their innocence appeared so evident to the king's commissioner, that he said "he only desired to be as good a Christian as the worst of them." The king thereupon ordered that their property should be restored to them. The Archbishop of Ambrune defeated the king's intention by alleging that the Waldenses had been excommunicated, and that their goods could not properly be restored until the sentence of excommunication was removed. Application was made to the pope to remove this sentence, but he and the archbishop together took good care that this should never take place, and it never did.

On one occasion in Provence the pope undertook to persecute the Waldenses. Louis, the King of France, on hearing of it, sent messengers to inquire into the matter. These messengers reported that the Waldenses were not such dangerous or bad people as they had been represented; that they lived with perfect

honesty, were friendly to all persons, caused their children to be baptized, had them taught the Lord's prayer, creed, and ten commandments; expounded the Scriptures with purity, kept the Lord's day sacred, feared God, honored the king, and wished well to the state. "Then," said the king, "they are much better Christians than myself or my Catholic subjects, and therefore they shall not be persecuted." He was as good as his word, and sent orders to stop the persecution.

At this time there were also great numbers of the Albigenses, who are to be distinguished from the Waldenses, scattered all through the south of France. The pope determined to extirpate them. He called on the nobles of France to assist him, promising them spoil, wealth, and honor in this world, and certain salvation in the next. Multitudes flocked to his standard. It was an easy way to purchase salvation and heaven.

The city of Bezieres was besieged. The governor, thinking it impossible to defend the place, came out to the pope's legate and implored mercy for the inhabitants, intimating that there were as many Roman Catholics as Albigenses in the city. The legate replied that all excuses were useless; the city must be delivered up to his discretion. The governor returned, and told the inhabitants that he could obtain no mercy unless the Albigenses would embrace the worship of the Church of Rome. The Roman Catholics in the city pressed them to comply; but they nobly answered that they would not forsake their religion for the base price of their frail life. That they would rather displease the pope, who could but kill their bodies, than God, who could cast both body and soul into hell. Whereupon the popish party sent to the legate, begging him not to include them in the *chastisement* of the Albigenses, and that the best way

was to win them over by gentleness. The legate fell into a violent passion, and declared that if all the city did not acknowledge their fault they should taste of one curse, without distinction of religion, sex, or age.

A general assault was made, and the city was taken by storm, when every cruelty that barbarity could invent was practiced. "Nothing was to be heard," says Foxe, "but the groans of men who lay weltering in their blood, the lamentations of mothers, who, after being violated by the soldiery, had their children taken from them, and dashed to pieces before their faces. The city being fired in various parts, new scenes of confusion arose. In several places the streets were streaming with blood! Those who hid themselves in their dwellings had only the dreadful alternative to remain and perish in the flames, or rush out and fall by the swords of the soldiers."

A messenger had been sent, inquiring how they should distinguish the innocent from the guilty. Amalric, abbot of Citeaux, the pope's legate, replied:

"Kill them; kill them all; kill man, woman, and child. Kill Roman Catholics as well as Albigenses; for when they are dead the Lord knows how to pick out his own."

Thus, with barbarous cruelty, the beautiful city of Bezieres was reduced to a heap of ruins, and sixty thousand persons were murdered!"

The infamous Simon, Earl of Monfort, was soon afterward appointed leader of the papal forces. He attacked the castle of Beron, and making himself master of it, ordered the eyes to be put out and the noses to be cut off of all the garrison, one person alone excepted, who was deprived of one eye only, that he might lead the rest away.

These are specimens of the cruelties practiced in France by the Roman Catholics previous to the Reformation. As that era approached fresh light seemed to be breaking on the nation from different quarters. Louis XII. called together all the clergy of France, by their representatives at Tours. This assembly declared that the king had a right to wage war on the pope. This was a bold step against Romanism.

In the year 1512 Thomas de Vio advanced in one of his works the idea that the pope was the absolute monarch of the Church. Louis XII. not approving of this doctrine, laid the book before the university, where a refutation of Vio's assertion was read, and received with great applause. Thus the truth was making rapid progress in France.

CHAPTER II.

WOULD THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH HAVE REFORMED HERSELF ?

WE have already spoken of the great corruption of the Church at the time of the Reformation. Roman Catholic writers have freely admitted this. Says one: "Rome, formerly so pure and so holy, is but a shop in which everything is sold—orders, priesthood, sins, sacrifices, masses; for her, gold is everything."

"I pass over in silence *les impudicités et les adultères*, by abstaining from which a person becomes the derision and jest of the others. In fact, the laity consider it as so certain that no priest observes celibacy, that in most of the parishes they will not have a priest at all unless he has a concubine,

so that their own families may be in less danger. Even then they are not safe."*

Says Silverius, who was afterward pope, under the name of Pius II.: "If for good reasons they have taken away marriage from priests, for better reasons it ought to be restored."†

Says the Cardinal Cusan, in speaking of the clergy: "All their care is for the temporal, nothing for the spiritual."‡

Clemangis says in another place: "What are nunneries in these times but execrable houses of Venus, or receptacles of young and wanton persons; so that now to make a girl a nun is to prostitute her."§

Would not the Roman Catholic Church have reformed itself? History, by facts, answers, No.

Adrian VI., when he was pope, confessed candidly the deplorable state of the Church, and urged reformation. He was the only one who was so candid. The prelates of the Church opposed him, accused him of impolicy in making such a confession, and soon afterward he died, it is supposed, by poison. Great joy was manifested after his death in Rome. Some young men put up a crown, formed of branches of trees, at the door of his physician, with the inscription: "To the liberator of his country." He was too good for Rome.

Fra Paolo Sarpi, the author of the celebrated work called "The Council of Trent," undertook to narrate everything connected with that assemblage literally and exactly. Though a theologian of the senate of Venice, when his work appeared it was too literal

* Clemangis Epist. ad Joan de Gersono.

† Platine, Vie de Pie II.

‡ Nicolas Cusan, lib. 8, de Concord. Cath., c. 29.

§ Liber de Ruina Ecclesie. His. de la Ref. France. Par F. Puaux. vol. i, p. 10.

and too exact for the clergy. An attempt was made to assassinate him. Afterward, when the surgeon was extracting the steel from the wound, he frigidly remarked, "I perceive in this the manner of Rome."

And when at length the Council of Trent met in the year 1545, professedly to reform, and for eighteen years deliberated on the state of the Church, what was accomplished? Nothing.

When Innocent VIII. died, the college of cardinals met to elect another pope. The Bishop of Concord delivered a sermon of great eloquence, representing the degeneracy of the Church, and the great necessity of electing an able and holy pontiff. He urged them to this by menacing them with all the curses of God if they did not faithfully accomplish it. After such a discourse who did they choose? The infamous Roderick Borgia, known as Alexander VI.

But the manner in which the high dignitaries of Rome proposed a reform, forbids us to suppose that they would ever have brought it about.

The celebrated Cardinal Pallavicini undertook to defend the Papacy against what Fra Paolo had said. Jurieu in his abridgment of the Council of Trent, analyzing the book of the cardinal, says:

"Behold in what manner Pallavicini represents to us the Roman Church. He confesses that it is influenced by a worldly and carnal policy. He avows that its present government is formed according to the rules of this world, and he insists that this is according to the intention of Jesus Christ.* He approves the practice of the Church in applying its wealth to sustain the great pomp of the Court of Rome, composed of cardinals and other numerous

* Livre 1, c. 25.

officers. He pretends that by this outward show infidels and Mohammedans will be drawn to the faith.* So as to attract unbelievers, and to preserve in the Church those who are there already, the Court of Rome employs sensual delights and other pleasures; she loves theaters and spectacles; she affects even to have them on a more magnificent scale than the world, so as to conquer the world by its own arms.”†

Julius III. consulted three bishops as to the means of more firmly establishing the holy see after it had been shaken by the Reformation. The three bishops met at Cologne in the year 1553, and presented to the pontiff a memorial, which could pass for a satire against Rome, if the authenticity of the curious document were not placed beyond doubt. We can only give a few brief extracts from it.

The prelates remind the pope that their communication must be secret and confidential, and then go on and state that the Lutherans truly hold the doctrines of Christ and his apostles as taught in early times, and that the Roman Catholics rather conformed to the opinions of the pope and whatever the Church taught. That in the time of the apostles, and for years afterward, (“We confess it without disguise,” say the bishops,) there were no cardinals and no pope, no great revenues, no expensive temples, no monasteries, and no priories. When they come to propose a remedy for the heresies which had given so much trouble to the holy father, they recommend first that in France and Italy a hundred new bishops should be created, and fifty cardinals. Thirty or forty of the most able of these should reside at Rome, and aid the pope by their counsels; the rest should

* Liber 8, c. 17.

† Liv. 6, c. 8.; liv. 6, c. 25. Introd. 8.

remain in their respective dioceses, where their principal and special business should be to amuse the people by games, spectacles, and diversions of all kinds, (*omne genus deliciis.*) Paul did not thus understand the duties of the episcopate, but times have greatly changed since then ; what it is necessary to save now is not the boat and nets of St. Peter, but the Vatican with its magnificence, and the papal throne with its authority. They proceed to other remedies. We will give a translation of their own words.

“The holy cardinals and bishops must celebrate mass frequently in person with all possible pomp and magnificence, consecrate in public baptismal fonts, ordain priests, bless temples, altars, cemeteries, baptize bells, receive novices ; for these are the things which astonish and charm the vulgar.”

“Among us every year, on holy Friday, the thrice holy oil of unction, for the sick is consecrated. This ceremony is performed by a bishop surrounded by twelve priests, who accompany the practice by three adorations, and the same number of salutations, exorcisms, and insufflations, (*insufflationibus.*) Let your holiness direct that for the future it should be necessary for this consecration at least five salutations and twenty priests ; order also that, to the oil, besides balm, should be added some production of a great price, such as manna, for example, and let it be declared that it fell in the desert, and that therefore it is employed with good reason.”

“When the water of baptism is consecrated salt and oil are mingled with it ; direct that a little vinegar should be added, because it was offered to Christ upon the cross.”

“In the dedication of a temple the bishops write

upon ashes, with their cross, the Latin and Greek alphabets; direct that they should add the Hebrew alphabet, because it was in these three languages that the inscription on the cross was written. Provided that they know it; however this is not of much importance, for they certainly do not know the Greek alphabet and hardly the Latin, and yet they write both on this occasion, so that it is the same as if they knew them."

"Order that the bishops, instead of confining themselves to the palm of the hand in anointing the priests, anoint also the back, and pour the oil upon the head and the body; for if a few drops can sanctify, a greater quantity of oil will sanctify more."

"When bells are baptized, incense and perfumes are burned before them; add music also and amber for the greater edification of the public, and to draw greater respect."

"When a bishop prepares to celebrate worship with pomp and magnificence, he is distinguished from the ordinary priests by a great number of ornaments, such as the bones or relics of some dead person, set in a cross of gold; direct him to carry, suspended from his neck, a whole arm, or leg, or head of some saint; this will greatly contribute to increase the piety of the crowd of people, and will produce in all who are engaged in the services an incredible respect, (*incredibili admiratione.*)

"All these ceremonies have been invented by sovereign pontiffs; you, who are a sovereign pontiff, can augment the number; you must do so if you would attain the end we have pointed out."

"The Gospel is, of all the books, that which has contributed the most to raise against us the tempests which have ruined us. Whoever examines it with

attention, and compares it afterward with what custom has introduced in our churches, cannot fail to remark that many of our doctrines are very far from those which the Gospel teaches, and are often even contrary." They naturally conclude that it ought not to be translated into the vulgar tongue.*

We ask again: Would not the Roman Catholic Church have reformed itself? We answer, yes; if plunging deeper into superstition and the darkness of the middle ages could be called a reform.

CHAPTER III.

MARGARET DE VALOIS — JAMES LEFEVRE — WILLIAM FAREL.

LOUIS XII., who, as we have already said, nobly protected his people against the persecutions and encroachments of the Roman Catholics, died in the year 1514, after a reign of sixteen years.

The brilliant Duke of Angoulême, afterward known as Francis I., succeeded him. Francis was a young man of twenty-two years of age, of fine figure and carriage. In the manly exercises of the day, in the gracefulness of his manner, in agreeable conversation, no one surpassed him. An accomplished soldier, he had already gained a name for himself in the victorious field of Marignano. Military glory was his

* *Avis sur les Moyens propres à soutenir l'Eglise Romaine; présenté au Pape Jules III., par quelques évêques réunis à Bologne.* Bibliothèque impériale, vol. in fol. B, No. 1038. De l'appendice *ad fasciculum rerum expendarum et fugiendarum*, etc., vol. ii. *Histoire de la Réformation Française*, par F. Puaux. Paris, 1859. Vol. i, pp. 855-857, etc.

idol, and beyond this, pleasure was the grand object of his life.

Francis had a sister. Young and beautiful in person, of fine education, and great natural abilities, Margaret de Valois was one of the most attractive persons in the French court. A French writer says of her: "Seldom has a woman received from heaven greater and more various gifts. Born upon the steps of the throne, she united to the graces of body the most brilliant qualities of the mind."

Never, perhaps, was a sister's love greater for a brother than was the love of Margaret for Francis. Brought up in the midst of everything that was gay and dazzling, they had enjoyed pleasure together, and together sought happiness in those earthly joys which are as unsatisfactory in a monarch's household as in the most humble cottage.

There was a man at this time in Paris, of humble origin, little personal pretensions, small stature, but of great intellect, learning, and eloquence. His name was James Lefevre, and, according to Erasmus, he occupied the first rank in the University. Born in the year 1455, he was now nearly sixty years of age. No one could be more religious than he was in practicing all the ceremonies of the Romish Church. It was while he was engaged in collecting the legends of the saints that his confidence in those ceremonies was shaken. He could not resist the impression that they were filled with superstition. Giving up his task he turned to the Bible. It was not long before his heart became so filled with its doctrines that he could not keep silence. He proclaimed them in his writings. He taught them in the University, as Luther and Melancthon did afterward in Germany, and the hearts of the students took fire as they listened to the

word of God. Margaret de Valois, while she shone, the center of attraction in a dissipated court, heard of the so-called new doctrine. The ladies of her court brought her Lefevre's writings, and it was not long before she heard him preach. Her heart turned to the Gospel, and she soon became known as a convert to it. She was not alone. The impressions made upon the students were not all transient. Among them was William Farel, born in Dauphine in the year 1489. He listened to Lefevre and wondered. He was his intimate friend, and like him zealous in all points for the Romish Church. Farel said himself, in speaking of his faith in Rome :

“ I believe in the cross, in pilgrimages, in images, vows, and relics. What the priest holds in his hands, puts into the box, and there shuts it up, eats and give others to eat, is my only true God, and to me there is no other, either in heaven or upon earth.”

Referring afterward to his state at that time, he says: “ Satan had so lodged the pope, the papacy, and all that is his in my heart, that even the pope had not so much of it in himself.”

And now, like Lefevre, he began to read the Scriptures. Astonishment seized his mind as he found their teaching so different from the teaching of his Church. He hesitated and feared greatly.

“ What shall I do ?” he often inquired with intense anxiety. Sometimes he was alarmed at the thought of his seeming presumption in daring even to question any doctrine of the Church. He went so far as to give up the Bible, and retired to the cell of a monastery near Paris, hoping to gain the peace for which he sighed. He afterward said, in reference to the time he remained among the monks :

“ I was wholly employed, day and night, in serving

the devil after the fashion of that man of sin, the pope. I had my pantheon in my heart, and such a troop of mediators, saviours, and gods, that I might well have passed for a papal register.

While this struggle was going on in his mind he heard Lefevre preach, and the word came with power to his heart. The doctrine of justification by faith, by the merits of Christ alone, possessed to him a wonderful fascination. He yielded to its influences. He turned to the Scriptures and sought light. It was hard to renounce what had so long seemed right to him. It was hard to tear from his heart what he had so long held sacred, and above all the worship of the virgin, for it had been implanted there from his very infancy; but he saw now that the word of God must be his guide. He saw there that Jesus was his only advocate, and, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the only object of worship. The struggle ceased. He believed in Jesus Christ as his Saviour, as his only Saviour, and his heart was filled with peace and joy.

Farel afterward became to France a little like what Luther was to Germany. And much more would he have accomplished than he did had he enjoyed the same opportunities as Luther. He seemed to be fitted by nature to do great things. He is described as "a man of invincible courage, great piety, learning, innocence of life, and unassuming modesty." His powers of eloquence were so great, that it is said of him, "swords were drawn, and bells rung while he was preaching, but in vain; and such was his ardor and force of expression that he seemed rather to thunder than to speak. His prayers also were wonderful; his heart seemed to lift the hearts of his hearers to heaven."

Thus, before Luther had commenced his career as a Reformer in Germany, Lefevre and Farel were disseminating the truths of the Bible in France.

The French Reformation was not the result of the German reform, but, proceeding from the same causes, it marched side by side with it. *“Elle fut la soeur, et non la fille de la Reformation Allemande.”**

CHAPTER IV.

BRICONNET—MARTYRDOM OF JOHN LECLERC.

AMONG those who, with Farel, had received the good seed in their hearts at this time, were Gerard Roussel, Martial Mazurier, Pavannes, Michel d'Arande, and others, who looked up to Lefevre as their spiritual father and guide.

Margaret de Valois, in the midst of a royal though profligate circle of relations and friends, continued to give evidence of a sincere desire to follow Christ. Another in high position was added to their number. William of Montbrun, son of Cardinal Briçonnet, received eagerly the doctrines of the Bible from the lips of Lefevre. William, whom we shall call Briçonnet, was bishop of Meaux, and he had no sooner felt the heavenly fire in his heart than he set about reforming his diocese. He found that a majority of the priests within his jurisdiction lived at Paris, away from their parishes, enjoying in the capital the money they received for watching over the souls of their parishioners. He convoked a synod of his clergy, to be held October 13, 1519, in which various steps

* Histoire de la Ref. Fran., par F. Puaux, Paris.

were taken to disseminate the truths of the Bible among the people. The curates were examined as to the performance of their duties. Out of one hundred and twenty-seven, fourteen only were accounted faithful. The Franciscan monks were forbidden to enter his pulpits at all. His labor was not in vain. Among the common people there began to be a great inquiry after the truth. Briçonnet and his curates proclaimed the true Gospel from the pulpits. The morals of the people were reformed, and superstitions rapidly disappeared.

Among those who listened and believed in Christ was one John Leclerc. He was a wool-carder of Meaux. His heart became inflamed with zeal and courage, so that what he felt in his own soul he declared boldly to others around him. Neither did he stop here; he went from house to house exhorting the people to give up their sins and turn to God.

Perfectly fearless of the priests, he wrote and published a proclamation against the pope, and put up placards on the gates of the cathedral, stating that the pope was antichrist. Happy would it have been for France if all her Reformers had been as bold as John Leclerc!

The monks were furious. The wool-comber was seized and cast into prison. Tried and condemned, his sentence was, to be whipped three days through the city, and on the third to be branded on the forehead. Leclerc was led out to receive the punishment to be inflicted on him. His hands were bound, and with his back bared to the whip he was led through the city. His track was soon marked with blood, and as blow after blow was laid upon him, the immense crowd which followed yelled, some with rage, while others seemed to show compassion.

There was one woman whose countenance no one could mistake. She, if no one else did, spoke to him words of pity and love. *She was his mother!*

“At last, on the third day,” says one, “when the blood-stained procession was ended, they halted with Leclerc at the usual place of execution. The hangman prepared the fire, heated the iron that was to stamp its burning mark on the evangelist, and approaching him, branded him on the forehead as a heretic. A shriek was heard, but it did not proceed from the martyr. His mother, a spectator of the dreadful scene, and wrung with anguish, endured a bitter strife; it was the enthusiasm of faith struggling in her heart with maternal love; faith prevailed at last, and she exclaimed, with a voice that made the adversaries tremble, ‘Glory to Jesus Christ and to his witnesses!’”*

Leclerc was set at liberty. We afterward meet with him at Metz, at a time when the people were about to celebrate one of their great festivals. Once in a year the people of Metz were in the habit of making a pilgrimage to a chapel about a league from the city. There they sought the pardon of their sins, and worshiped the image of the virgin and other saints contained in the chapel.

Though Leclerc had suffered stripes, imprisonment, and burning for Christ’s sake, yet his spirit was stirred within him as he thought of their idolatry. He was determined if he could to prevent it. As it became dark, the evening before the festival, he went out to the place, and there he sat down silently before the statues.

What his thoughts were we can only conjecture.

* Merle d’Aubigné, Hist. Ref., vol. iii, p. 391. Hist. French Ref., par F. Puaux, Paris, 1859. vol. i, p. 68. Crespin, livr. xi, p. 68.

He soon rose from his seat, and, animated by the spirit of those righteous laws which denounce idolatry, he broke the images in pieces, and leaving their fragments returned to the city at about daybreak.

And now the people, the monks, the priests, prepared for their pilgrimage. With banners and music, a great procession marched out to the temple of idolatry. As they arrived at the place they beheld the scene before them with astonishment and indignation. The Philistines could not have been more surprised when they found Dagon fallen to the earth mutilated, than were the priests of Metz as they beheld the broken fragments of their idols lying around the altar. A general cry uprose from every mouth, "Death, death to the sacrilegious wretch!"

They returned to the city and searched for Leclerc, who they were sure had committed the act. He was soon found, and seized, confessed that he had broken the images, and at the same time, like Paul before his accusers, preached Jesus to them, and told them to worship God alone. His trial was of short duration, and at its close he was sentenced to be burned alive.

They led him out to execution. As he approached the place he beheld men heating pinchers. He must have known and felt the terrible use they were about to make of them. But he seemed to be calm amid the wild tumult and yells of the populace.

"They began," says the author we have quoted, "by cutting off his right hand; then taking up the burning pincers they tore off his nose; after this they lacerated his arms, and when they had thus mangled them in several places, they concluded by burning his breasts. While his enemies were in this manner wreaking their vengeance on his body, Leclerc's

mind was at rest. He recited solemnly, and with a loud voice, these words of David: 'Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord; he is their help and their shield !'*

"The sight of such fortitude," says the author referred to, "daunted their enemies, and strengthened the faithful; the people who had before shown so much anger were astonished and touched with compassion.

"After these tortures Leclerc was burned by a slow fire, in conformity with his sentence."

Again we repeat, happy would France have been had all her Reformers possessed the courage of Leclerc !

CHAPTER V.

TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL IN FRANCE.

We have chosen to finish the history of Leclerc, although it has carried us a little beyond the date of the events which we were narrating.

We have said that Francis I. came to the throne in the year 1514. Long afterward the Gospel seemed to be gaining ground every year in France.

* Merle d'Aubigné's Hist. of Ref., vol. iii, p. 407.

In the year 1521 Noel Bédier, in whom alone Erasmus declared there were three millions of monks, at the head of the University of the Sorbonne, accused and procured the condemnation of Lefevre. Was the aged Christian, now sixty-six years old, to be burned like Leclerc? Margaret de Valois was his guardian angel. By her intercession with the king she saved him: she did more; by the power of the love which she felt for her brother she induced Francis to attend the preaching of the Reformers; and though he had taken sides with the pope, though a round of pleasures beset him on all sides, again and again he was beheld listening to the eloquent and persuasive sermons of Michel d'Arande. Full of joy she wrote to Briconnet, thanking him for having sent her this preacher.*

Notwithstanding the gayety and ambition of Francis I., the word of God made such a deep impression on him that he was not afraid to manifest his sympathies in favor of the Lutheran ideas which were beginning to prevail on all sides. Even the notorious Louise de Savoie, his mother, heard d'Arande with interest, and was inclined to associate herself with the king in projects of reformation. Margaret wrote in November that they were both contemplating the public avowal of their belief that the doctrines in question were not heresy.†

Briconnet wrote to her on the 22d December, 1521, as follows: "I praise our Lord, who has inspired in the king a desire to execute what I have heard. In doing so he will show himself to be a true vicegerent of the true God."‡

* Nouvelles Letters de la Reine Maguerite, pp. 273, 274. Ref. Franc.,
par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 58. † Ibid.

‡ Gerard Roussel, par Schmidt, p. 18.

The favorable disposition of the king continued all through the year 1522. Michel d'Arande continued his explanations of the Holy Scriptures, and became every day dearer to Margaret. Her mother, Louise de Savoie, was at last convinced of the abuses connected with the Romish Church. In December, 1522, she wrote in her journal, which we translate as literally as possible:

“ My son and I, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, begin to know the hypocrites; white, black, smoky, and all colors; from whom may God, in his clemency and infinite goodness, preserve and defend us! for, unless Jesus Christ is a liar, there is no more dangerous generation to be found anywhere.”*

Had Francis I. been more serious in his character, had he followed up his religious impressions by forsaking his pleasures, to all human appearance the papacy would soon have fallen to the ground in France.

In the mean time Briçonnet is spreading the light more and more in Meaux. His episcopal residence was a refuge for the Reformers. Here might be found at different times Lefevre, Farel, Roussel, the young Le Comte, Mazurier, Caroli, and others who labored in the same cause. Here was founded, by his exertions, a Biblical school, in which young men were prepared to go forth throughout France and preach the Gospel. It was maintained by the bishop's private purse. Above all, here the New Testament was translated by Lefevre into the French language. As soon as it was published Briçonnet scattered it everywhere, and everywhere it was received with great eagerness. The vine-dressers, the mechanics, the

* Voyez Michaud et Poujoulat: Nouvelle Collection de Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de France. Paris, 1838. Liv. v, p. 23.

wool-carders, and wool-combers, who were numerous in Meaux, seemed to have no other conversation than talking of the Scriptures. Their Sundays and festival days, instead of being days of hilarity and amusement, were now employed in reading the word of God.* It was a wonderful thing to behold these sincere men, so lately stooping under the superstitions of Rome, waking up from their sleep of death. The old idolatry was tottering everywhere like a ruinous house. Fame on swift wings carried all through France tidings of the zeal, the spiritual life, the joy of the faithful Christians of Meaux.

“But,” says a French author, “the devil was watching, and the Sorbonne also.”

The pious doctors of the University, with Bedier at their head, again made an effort to obtain a victim, whom they might offer upon their deserted altars.

Louis de Berquin had been, like Saul of Tarsus, zealous in all points for the religion of his fathers. He had been careful to observe the festivals and fasts, to attend masses and confessions from his youth. But, like Saul, the Spirit of God had arrested him, and he became one of the pillars of the rising Church. Berquin was selected by the agents of the clergy. Having been arrested, they found in his possession some writings of Luther, which he had translated into French. This was in the month of May, 1523. He was sentenced to make a public abjuration, and to promise not to write or translate anything contrary to the faith of the Church. This was met by a direct refusal. He was taken before the Bishop of Paris, when Margaret de Valois interposed, and saved him also.

On the 1st of May, 1523, Lefevre was appointed

* *Hist. des Martyrs*, liv. iv, p. 170.

grand vicar at Meaux, where, in conjunction with Briçonnet, he labored to promote the cause of God. Again he was summoned to retract, and again was saved by the efforts of Margaret de Valois.

The bishop said about this time from the pulpit to his pious hearers: "If any one shall announce to you a Gospel different from what you have received, let him be *anathema*;" and, "if ever I change my opinion, and preach to you anything contrary to what I now teach you, do not believe me."

CHAPTER VI.

FALL OF BRICONNET.

THE 15th of October, 1523, was a remarkable day in the history of the French Reformation. All through the summer the priests had been hard at work. It is a peculiar trait in the character of the Roman Catholic Church that she is never discouraged by defeat. Whether she is laboring in the sixteenth century to bring heretics to trial, or in the nineteenth century to drive the Bible from the common schools, defeat after defeat seems only to impart to her new strength to persevere. She had failed twice in getting Lefevre into her hands; Louis de Berquin had escaped. Antoine Papillon had been accused also, but the same noble woman had interposed and protected him also.

Exasperated, Bedier and his colleagues determined to take a bold step, and aim at higher game.

They accused Briçonnet, the zealous bishop, who was training young men for the Protestant ministry,

in whose house the New Testament was translated, whose hearers were everywhere reading the word of God. On the day we have named his people had assembled to hear him preach. To their astonishment he recommended to them the superstitions which he had himself labored to destroy, and forbade the reading of a book of Luther which he had himself caused to be translated.*

Their labors had not been in vain. The bishop well understood the power of the priests, and his heart failed him. He began to waver. They pressed him on, and when they found that he yielded a little they knew that he was in their power. Nothing then would satisfy them but a complete humiliation. To recant at Paris was not enough. He must do so before his people to whom he had preached the Gospel of Christ. Like the trembling Christian who, when Satan tempts, violates his conscience in some small matter, he is caught in the net spread for him by his malignant adversary, and is hurried, struggling and helpless, to complete destruction.

Lefevre and his friends, who had made the diocese of Briçonnet their asylum, were now obliged to separate from him. It must have been sad for the bishop to part with them. He knew they were right in the sentiments which they had embraced and labored together to propagate, and shame was mingled with grief in the bitter cup which he was forced to drink. Had he been willing to bear the reproach of Christ, and to have been singular among the other bishops and prelates of the Church of Rome, no doubt the name of William Briçonnet would have come down to us as the names of Luther, Zwingle, Cranmer, Knox,

* Guy Bret., p. 170, et suiv. His. Ref. Franc., par F. Puaux, vol. i, pp. 64, 65.

honored and revered throughout Protestant Christendom.

He did not fall alone. **Martial Mazurier** was accused of heresy, and thrown into prison. **Pierre Caroli** was charged with preaching false doctrines. **James Pavannes** was included with them. Imitating the Bishop of Meaux, the two first retracted, and basely denied the doctrines they had preached. Pavannes was firm, and asserted that he preferred death to recantation. Mazurier, mortified that one so young (Pavannes was a young student) should exhibit greater resolution than himself, visited him in his prison.

"You deceive yourself, James," said he; "you have not seen the bottom of the sea, but only the waves on the top. You are yet young, and men who, like you, have made profession of the truth, have not feared to retract to save their lives. I have done so. Why will you not do the same?" And then he spoke to the young man of the torments which were before him, and no doubt pointed out to him death at the stake as a certain result of his firmness.

The student was shaken, and this was victory to Satan; for the Christian to falter is to fall; a soldier of Christ had better die in the ranks than waver in the fight.

On the 25th day of November, 1524, James Pavannes followed his two companions, and denied the faith which he had espoused. He saved his life, but lost his peace of mind. The priests were greatly encouraged. They turned again toward Briconnet, and determined to make an example of him the second time. The Franciscan friars whom he had excluded from his pulpits were his accusers. They said that he had called them, from the pulpit, bigots, false prophets,

scribes and Pharisees; that he had distributed the Bible in the vulgar tongue, and taught that all men had the right to read it. The bishop had now a second opportunity to become a confessor of Christ. How greatly we desire, as we think of his labors in the cause of the Reformation, as we consider his high position and his great influence, that he will boldly confess the charge and defy his persecutors! How the faithful men who have heard him preach, and who in their workshops and fields have commended his piety, will rejoice. Will he stand up for God again?

CHAPTER VII.

DRAMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE REFORMERS AND THE POPE.

WHILE the trial of the Bishop of Meaux is in progress we will return to the king and his court. We have said that the love of pleasure was a ruling passion with the king. Even however in his pleasures and the dissipations of his royal palace we may discover the bent of his mind at this time.

It is in the year 1524. A numerous and chosen company was gathered in the palace of the king to witness a dramatic representation. The curtain rose, and a strange spectacle met the eyes of the spectators. The pope, clothed in his pontifical robes and wearing his triple crown, was beheld seated on a high throne. Around his holiness were cardinals, bishops, and mendicant monks. On the middle of the stage the eye distinguishes a heap of coals, black, as if dead, but still smoking; an old man with white hair is try-

ing to kindle them up, delivering at the same time, to the pope and his attendants, a discourse upon the corruption which reigns in the Church, and on the necessity of proceeding to a reformation. This old man is Reuchlin, the Lefevre of Germany. He is heard with coldness by the holy father and his court, but after him appears a man to whom the cardinals give a grand and gracious reception. He has hardly opened his mouth when the spectator recognizes the careful Erasmus. He speaks of the abuses of the Church, but in measured words. He thinks that some reforms ought to take place, but that it would be dangerous to hasten them too much. Hardly has he finished his speech when he takes his place behind the cardinals, who speak to him very courteously, in hopes of gaining to their side so eminent a theologian.

To Erasmus succeeds a personage who in no wise resembles him. He enters armed, booted, and spurred. His appearance is that of a warrior trained to battles. He goes straight to the pope: "Thou art antichrist," he says to him; "thy vices, and those of thy cardinals and monks, have thrown the Church into an abyss of corruption."

He then menaces him with the divine wrath, and taking a pair of bellows blows with earnestness at the black coals, from which proceeds a brilliant flame. The clergy shrink back with fear, when all at once the fiery denunciator falls dead on the stage. Joyfully the monks bury him without any funeral honors. In this actor Ulrich de Hutten is recognized, the terrible pamphleteer. The pope, cardinals, and monks now exhibit great joy. In the midst of their triumph a monk of poor appearance advances. Though feeble in body, he has an eye of fire and a firm step. He *throws a look of contempt and wrath upon the pope*

and his followers, and raising the logs of wood which he carries in his arms he throws them on the coals, and cries with a loud voice: "I will kindle a fire which shall shine throughout the whole world, so that Christ, who has nearly disappeared from the earth by your trickeries, shall appear again everywhere in spite of you!"

At these words every one present recognizes Luther, the great Reformer of Germany.

The fire burns high. The pope and his friends, trembling, and seized with fear, try, but in vain, to extinguish the flames, which, in immense spirals, rise toward heaven. They do not, however, altogether lose their courage, but deliberate upon what is best to be done. Each one gives his advice, but the means proposed appear so insufficient that they are immediately abandoned. They seem reduced to extremities, when a new personage presents himself. He is little, short, stout, and very fat; of a florid complexion, and withal a monk of the mendicant orders.

"My order," says he, "has been founded to punish heretical pravity; if St. Peter, that is the pope, will confide to me the task of restoring to the bosom of the Church its revolted members, I promise to extinguish the rising flame, and to bring every one into obedience."

The son of St. Dominic spoke with so much assurance that he inspired all the company with his own confidence. Moved by his zeal, the pope promised the monk, and those of his order, the highest ecclesiastical dignities. Then arming himself with the most terrible anathemas of his Church, the pope thunders them against those who have kindled the fire. But he does so with so much hate and wrath that he is seized with a fit, which suddenly kills him.

At the sight of the pontiff struck down by death, the room is filled with loud bursts of laughter, and the curtain falls.*

And all this was witnessed and applauded by the king, who, nine years later, became a most bitter enemy of the Reformation.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARTYRDOM OF PAVANNES AND SCHUCH.

WE return to Briçonnet. He is accused and arraigned. But his trial itself was an abject humiliation. He had appealed to the Parliament, and his appeal had been rejected; and before two counselors of the court, and two doctors of the Sorbonne only, he, who was a bishop of Rome, the son of a cardinal, a friend of the king, was condemned to pay a fine of two hundred pounds, which became the price of blood, because it was employed in defraying the expenses of prosecuting heretics in his own diocese.† This was the 29th of November, 1525. From this day we hear little of Briçonnet, and nothing which leads us to doubt that he was afterward a strict and faithful Roman Catholic. Thus fell one of the most early, one of the most zealous, one of the most eminent friends of the Reformation in France.

Such success encouraged the clergy to proceed further. Mazurier, Caroli, and Pavannes they suspected were not thoroughly converted back to Ro-

* Gerdesius, *Hist. Evang. Renov.*, tom. ii, num. 48. Smedley, *Hist. of the Rel. Ref. in France*, vol. i, p. 23. *Histoire de la Ref. Franc.*, par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 218, etc.

† Toussaint du Plessis, p. 288.

manism. So they arrested them again, and Mazurier and Caroli protested earnestly their attachment to Romanism, and again denied the cause which they had once espoused; but the young student, instead of any such confession, deplored his former recantation, and boldly declared his adherence to the Reformers' doctrines. He had had no peace away from God, but, filled with sadness, constantly reproached himself. As soon as he felt that he was suffering for Christ's sake, as he knew he ought to have done at first, his heart was filled with the peace which he had once enjoyed.

With such sentiments he appeared before the Parliament, who condemned him to the punishment of fire, to be burned until he was dead. Led out to the place of execution, he went up, intrepid and serene, upon the wood which was to consume him. By some want of foresight which was not usual with them, they had neglected to gag him. As the people ran together in crowds to see him die, he began to address them. Full of the spirit of God, with joy upon his countenance, and joyful accents upon his lips, the young man spoke to them of Christ, and of the faith for which he was about to die, with such eloquence, that one of the doctors of the Sorbonne afterward remarked, "that he would rather the Church had paid a million of gold, than to have allowed James Pavannes to speak to the people."* The spirit which he displayed all through his trial and execution served to strengthen those who truly loved God. At the same time a Lutheran was burned, known in history as the Hermit of Livry.

A pastor by the name of Wolfgang Schuch was

* Ruchat, tom. iv, p. 188. Nouvelle edition.

another victim. He preached in the town of St. Hippolyte. A threat having been made by the Duke Antoine de Lorraine, that he would destroy the city by fire and sword unless they returned to Rome, the good pastor, to save his flock, came himself to the duke, and was immediately thrown into a filthy-prison. Friar Bonaventura, who presided on the trial, exclaimed when he saw him: "Heretic! Judas! devil!"

Schuch held up his Bible; whereupon they rushed on him, tore it away from him, and burned it. They then condemned him to be burned alive. On hearing the sentence he raised his eyes to heaven, mildly saying: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." When they brought him to the place of execution they burned his books before his face, and called on him to retract; but he refused, saying: "It is thou, O Lord, who hast called me, and thou wilt give me strength unto the end!"

While he stood on the pile, and while the fire burned around him, he repeated the fifty-first psalm until he was stifled by the smoke and flames.* This was in the year 1525.

* His. Ref. Franc., par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 72. Merle d'Aubigné, His. Ref., vol. iii, p. 467.

CHAPTER IX.

THE INQUISITION INTRODUCED — FRANCIS I. RETURNS FROM SPAIN — BRICONNET AGAIN — DE BERQUIN.

A POLITICAL event of great importance had taken place at this time which turned against the Reformation in France, and was afterward the cause of many of the persecutions which occurred. The young and ambitious Charles V. sat on the imperial throne. Ruling over Spain, Belgium, a part of Italy, and of the present France, joined to his immense states in Germany and America, he was the most powerful monarch of Europe. Only Francis I. on the throne of France could hope to oppose him with any effect. Francis undertook the task, and was captured by Charles, at Pavia, on the 24th of February, 1525, and held as a prisoner of state. The Duke of Alençon, husband of Margaret de Valois, was slain in the same battle. The realm was without a king. A universal panic succeeded, and the priests then raised the cry that it was a judgment of God because they had not extirpated the heretics.

Louisa, the mother of Francis, seemed to lose all her religious impressions, which never had been very deep, and thought only of pleasing the pope, hoping that through his influence Francis might be liberated and Charles humbled.

She, therefore, had written to his holiness, inquiring how she could most effectually destroy the heresies which were constantly springing up from reading the Bible. The answer of the holy father, vicar of Jesus

Christ, head of the Roman Catholic Church, was not long delayed. It was as follows: "Introduce the Inquisition."

Inquisitors were accordingly appointed, consisting of two laymen and two ecclesiastics. William Duchesne was one of the latter. He was second only to Bedier in persecuting zeal. The pope sent his brief, dated May 20, 1525, approving of the appointment, and stating that all who were found guilty of being Lutherans were to be delivered over to the secular arm, which was, to be burned alive.* Hence the executions which we have narrated, perpetrated while the king of France was a prisoner and absent from his kingdom.

The news from Spain added to the discouragement of the already disheartened friends of the Reformation. The king was sick. They feared his life was in danger, and that the throne would be left in the hands of his mother, Louisa. Margaret of Valois, in this position of affairs, declared her intention of going to Spain, to make an effort to save her brother. The announcement was received with great joy, especially were those who loved the Bible full of hope. The captivity of the king had let loose the hatred of their adversaries; his deliverance they thought would check it. Great preparations were made for her departure. Charles, the emperor, was written to, who at first objected, saying it was the duty of his ministers to arrange the affair.

"One hour's conference," exclaimed Selves, the president, "between your majesty the king, my master, and the Duchess of Alençon would forward the treaty more than a month's discussion between diplomatists."

* Merle d'Aubigné, Hist. Ref., vol. iii, p. 452.

She wrote to her brother before embarking:

“ I will not delay either on account of my own security, or of the sea, which is unsettled at this season, to hasten toward the place where I may see you; for fear of death, imprisonment, and every sort of evil are now so habitual to me, that I hold lightly my life, health, glory, and honor, thinking by this means to share *your* fortune, which I would desire to bear alone.”

It was while Margaret was in Madrid that Briçonnet finally and shamefully fell.

It does not come within the limits of our task to follow the Duchess d'Alençon in her mission to Spain to save her brother. We will meet her at her return to France, where she learns with grief the persecutions which have taken place during her absence. Immediately she took the suffering Christians under her protection, snatched them from the hands of Bedier, and the second time saved Louis de Berquin from the hands of his enemies.

“ It is affecting,” says a late French writer, “ to behold this young and pious woman, serving her God in the midst of a dissolute court, becoming for the reformed the angel who opened to Peter the prison gates within which the priests and Pharisees had thrown him.”*

Francis I. returned to his kingdom in the month of March, 1526, after an absence of one year and twenty-two days. Not well satisfied with what had taken place in regard to the Reformers, he allowed his sister to recall the aged Lefevre and Gerard Roussel. It was a day of great joy to the friends of the Reformation when this event took place, and Paris became a kind of *rendezvous* for those who

* *Histoire de la Ref. Franc.*, par Puaux, vol. 1, p. 77.
Hist. Reformation.

preached the Gospel. It was not after all a perfectly safe place. It was not long before the king began to manifest a dislike to the Lutheran doctrines. It was clear that he was more a Roman Catholic than he had been previous to the battle of Pavia. There was some cause for this. He would not renounce the pleasures of this world for Christ, and having chosen them, he turned naturally from the faith which condemned them. This was not all. His two children were hostages in Madrid, in the power of Charles V., who considered himself as the defender of the Church. It was, he thought, for his interest to take sides in religion both with the pope and Charles.* But this was not all. He began to imagine that the Reformers would attack the authority of kings as well as that of the pope, and that his own crown, which did not feel as secure upon his head since his imprisonment in Spain, might be in danger. Brantome relates that one day Francis accidentally said of the doctrines of Luther: "That this novelty tended principally to the overthrow of monarchy, both divine and human."

At another time he was speaking of the pope to the nuncio of the latter, and reminding him of the example of Henry VIII., when the nuncio replied:

"Truly, sire, you will be the first sufferer; a new religion given to a nation requires afterward only a change of prince."†

We discover here the probable source from which Francis derived his opinion.

More and more feeble became the arm which had protected the Protestants. A sister's influence was not sufficient to resist the constant importunity of the

* Hist. Ref. Franc., par F. Puaux, p. 78.

† French Prize Essay, by C. Villers, p. 133.

priests. New victims were arrested and led to the stake, and everywhere ceaseless, untiring efforts were made by inquisitors to uproot the dreaded heresy.

Let us take one last look at Briçonnet as he labors now to destroy the faith which he had once so loved.

It is the year 1528. A prisoner, whose name was Denis, from the village of Rieux, was sleeping in his cell. In these days of persecution, a man condemned to death slept upon the damp slabs of his prison. His sleep was sweet and peaceful, because he had in his conscience the testimony, so precious at such an hour, that he was ready to sacrifice everything rather than deny his faith. His crime was Lutheranism. He was waiting for the crown which God places on the head of his chosen ones. The door opens. A visitor enters and awakes him. His object is to save the prisoner from certain death by inducing him to recant. The sleeping man opens his eyes, and immediately recognizes him who speaks to him. With a look full of contempt and disdain he regards his visitor, who, quailing beneath the eye of the martyr, withdrew from his cell. It was Briçonnet. Denis was executed on the 3d of July, 1528.*

Louis de Berquin was the third time accused. With a perseverance which would have done honor to a better cause, the Romish Church was determined to hunt him down. He was too eminent a man to live a Protestant. Learning, wisdom, acuteness, eloquence, united to great zeal and devoted piety, rendered him too formidable an adversary. Erasmus, who was his friend, had warned him. "They will kill you," he wrote. He was brought to trial, and condemned to have his tongue pierced; and if he

* Hist. de la Ref. France, par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 80.

would recant, to perpetual imprisonment; if he would not recant, to be burned.

It is sad to meet in such a place the celebrated William Budé, sitting as one of the judges. He was called the prodigy of France for his classical acquirements, and was the secretary and librarian of Francis I. This eminent man, desirous of preserving to the sciences and letters such a man as de Berquin, came to him and urged him greatly to recant. He at last succeeded, and de Berquin signed a recantation.

Hardly was the act committed when he repented bitterly, and asked to be put to death with great earnestness, (*demanda la mort à grands cris*), so that he might make some amends for what he had done. Taking advantage of the absence of the king, who had gone to Blois with his court, they led him out for execution to *La Place de Grève*. Well remembering the effect produced by the eloquence of Pavannes, they took precautions to prevent any like occurrence again, and when de Berquin began to speak to the people hired men drowned his voice by their cries. He was burned on the 22d of April, 1529.*

Thus died, at forty years of age, a man whose loss was deeply felt by all the rising Church. His glorious death, however, was infinitely better than the apostasy of Briçonnet.

“The ideas,” says the French author I have quoted, “which Bedier wished to smother under the funeral pyre of the martyr, were not such as perish in the flames. They pass over ramparts and bayonets, and even glide under the robe of an inquisitor. Men wished to know De Berquin’s crime, and when they knew it many became his followers. Bedier

* Crepin, liv. ii, p. 97.

triumphed in his hate, the martyr in his principles."

Shall we pause a moment and look about us to behold the flames as they rise around so many innocent victims of the Inquisition all throughout France and Europe? How many of them are forgotten! The names of a few here and there only have come down to us, and *they* are almost forgotten by those who are now enjoying the blessings which, in a secondary sense, were purchased by their blood. And yet they are as worthy of a place in history as many whose names are like household words. They are *more* worthy than the great captains and warriors of the earth who have died on the battle-field. *They* lived and fell for glory; the martyrs lived and died for Christ. We will then love and revere their memory. They are our suffering brethren, suffering not only for religion but for liberty of conscience. We use again almost the words of the eloquent writer to whom I have referred:

"Louis de Berquin was the forerunner of the liberty of which England and America offer us the model. These are the men who have changed the face of the world which forgets them. O justice, justice for these founders of our liberties! Justice for their memory! Glory for their name! Let the clergy curse them; but you, who regard thought as a gift of God which no one can chain, bow with respect before the precursors of modern liberty. . . . There are crowns and palms for political scaffolds, but not a single *souvenir* for the Protestant funeral pyres. We leave thus in forgetfulness those who three centuries ago opened with their martyr hands the glorious temple of our liberties."

Let the Church of Rome point to our different de-

nominations if she chooses, and tell us that these divisions are the result of our liberty. We will reply, that so far from being antagonistic divisions, they are but different bodies of one grand whole—one glorious universal Church. Rome has a union of form; while Lutherans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Episcopalian, Baptists, have a union of life and spirit; as the Churches of Corinth, Ephesus, Philadelphia, Jerusalem, Galatia were but different parts of one invisible Church in the days of the apostles. Rome with her principle of authority may make faithful automatons. Protestantism with her principle of liberty makes *thinking* Christians.

CHAPTER X.

A CHURCH HAUNTED.

THE efforts of the clergy seemed to be vain. The fire spread everywhere. The Lutheran ideas seemed to circulate in the air, and without consultation with each other, in a hundred parts of France at a time, serious men manifested their opposition to the superstitions of the Church.

The priests found that the death of the men was not the death of their principles. Indefatigable in their efforts, they resorted to other means of destroying heresy. The following is an example:

In the year 1530 the wife of the sheriff of Orleans died. She seemed to have received some sparks of truth, but no one suspected her of being anything but a Roman Catholic. Some days before she died she wrote in her will as follows:

"I wish to be buried without pomp, without candles, without chants."

Her husband conformed religiously to her desires, and she was buried in the church of the Franciscans, where the sheriff had a family vault.

The friars of St. Francis, who had counted upon a good round sum for the burial of one in her position, did not conceal their bad temper and chagrin at the impiety of the sheriff. The latter to pacify the Franciscans offered them six crowns, but thinking it entirely too little they resolved to have their revenge. Aided by two doctors of divinity from Paris, they trained a young novice to the part which they wished him to play. When he was properly instructed they concealed him in the vaulted roof of their church. At a signal agreed upon the novice made a noise so frightful that it was impossible to go on with the service. A superstitious terror seized the ignorant multitude in the church. The monks asserted that it was a spirit, and proceeded to interrogate it; they urged it to answer, and the novice, perfectly trained to his part, sometimes answered in words, and sometimes in making an unearthly noise. No one doubted that there was a spirit in the church. Who would dare to suspect any trickery on the part of those men of God who passed their time in praying and singing?

It was soon known all throughout Orleans that a spirit haunted the church of the Franciscans. On a set day the monks invited some distinguished persons to be present at the church, and hardly had the service commenced when the same frightful noise was heard. The friars seemed to be terrified and astonished.

"There is no longer any doubt," said they, "that the church is haunted by an evil spirit. We must drive it out."

Brother Colliman was appointed to this important duty. Wax candles, salt, little bells, and holy water are provided. He is armed with all the learned formulas by means of which the Church conjures infernal spirits. Every eye is fixed upon the brother who undertakes with solemnity his terrible and mysterious mission. He addresses the spirit, and challenges it to answer. It replies by redoubling its hurly-burly (*tintamarre*). Brother Colliman in a loud voice asks if it is not one of the souls interred in the church. The spirit answered,

“Yes.”

All present are filled with astonishment. Brother Colliman mentions several names, asking it at each time if it is the soul of the one he had repeated. The spirit makes no answer. At last, after a great many had been named, the monk asked if it could be possible that it was the soul of the sheriff's wife. With a voice strongly accented the spirit answered,

“Yes.”

The congregation looked at each other in terror. The exorcist continued his questions, and asked the spirit what sin it had committed to be compelled to wander on the earth. Naming the seven capital sins, he demanded at each one if he was guilty of it.

No answer.

Could the sheriff's wife, by some chance, have died Lutheran? This was the next question.

“Yes,” said the spirit.

“Why then do you make such a racket [*tapage*]?”

“Because her body is buried in the church.”

“Must it be taken up?”

“Yes.”

The Franciscans immediately went to work. They stripped the church of all its ornaments, and carried

them to a large room in their monastery, saying that their conscience forbade them to celebrate the holy mysteries in a church haunted by an evil and heretical spirit. This action of the monks made a great stir among the people. The agent of the bishop learned what was going on, and resolved to see for himself. Having arrived at the place, he caused a jury to be summoned for the purpose of holding an inquest upon the whole matter. So as to proceed according to the rules of the Church, he directed them to go through all the exorcisms pointed out in the sacred canons. The foreman of the jury, who appears to have been a man of good sense, remarked that he thought it would be well before commencing their operations to visit the top of the church.

"If we should find there," said he, "a visible spirit, it would be useless to proceed against an invisible one."

This judicious remark was received with great disapprobation by the Franciscans. One of them, whose name was Stephen d'Arras, spoke out: "Such a visit would trouble the spirit in its functions."

While this dispute was going on, some boys resolved to profit by the suggestion, and went up into the roof to discover the spirit. The novice, who had been listening to what was going on, got out of the way in time to escape; but the monks, seeing the boys above them, refused to go on with their exorcisms.

The sheriff, having learned what had taken place, prosecuted the Franciscans for their conduct. The latter demurred to the jurisdiction of the judges, whereupon the king sent commissioners from Paris to investigate the subject. It was some time before they could come to any conclusion, and it may be the Church of Rome would have enjoyed the credit

of another miracle in her annals if they had not found the novice. He was very unwilling to say anything about it.

“The Franciscans will kill me,” said he.

On being assured that he would be protected, he confessed the part he had taken, and swore to it in the presence of the monks. The royal commissioners condemned the latter to imprisonment and to be stripped of their cowls. The first part of their sentence was executed, but the last part was prevented by the popular feeling in favor of Rome.*

CHAPTER XI.

INCREASE OF PROTESTANTS — DE CATURCE TRIED AND CONDEMNED — CLEMENT VII., WITH HIS BEAUTIFUL NIECE, VISITS THE COURT OF FRANCE.

LET us visit again one of those scenes where Christianity reveals its wonderful power to sustain the soul. “The first pages of Protestantism are only read by the light of the flames which consumed its martyrs.”

As we have said, the death of Louis de Berquin was producing a rich harvest. Learned men and peasants inquired everywhere why the Sorbonne had condemned and executed a man as illustrious for his attainments in knowledge as for his birth, and everywhere the answer was repeated: “His crime was that he preferred the Holy Scriptures to the teachings of the Church.”

* *Histoire Ref. Franc.*, par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 214, etc.

At Orleans, at Bourges, at Rouen, Lyons, and Toulouse, and other cities, each one commented on his death, and at all these places he found advocates.

The priests became more zealous. They added victim to victim, imputing to their too great indulgence their want of success. But the death of one Lutheran brought to life ten in his place. The clergy did not see it.

John de Caturce was professor in the law school of Toulouse. We are not told how he found the pardon of his sins and became a Christian; but when he did so he disdained concealment, and openly spoke to others of the love of Christ, which he felt burning in his heart.

This was enough. He was arrested and thrown into a dungeon. The particulars of his accusation were:

1. He had made an exhortation at Limoux, (this was the place of his birth.)

2. On the epiphany, (called sometimes in French the day of kings, or feast of kings,) instead of having it said in the company where he was, *The king drinks*, he had caused it to be repeated, *Christ reigns in our hearts*.

3. After the repast, instead of singing songs, or dancing, he had thought best (or proposed) that each guest should recite a verse from the Holy Scriptures.

These crimes appeared heinous enough to bring him before the Parliament. *There* he became a witness for his Master, and all through the course of his trial referred to the Scriptures, citing them, and urging his adversaries to prove his guilt by their authority.

In the midst of the proceedings they stopped short;

they seemed to wish to save his life, and probably, in fact, did desire to do so. They proposed to acquit him if he would, in one of his public lessons, simply declare that he had erred on three points.

De Caturce hesitated. He was yet young; a brilliant future seemed to be before him. Perhaps he might live to be eminently useful in the cause of the reform. It was easy to say that he had erred, and did not seem to be much of a compromise. In that moment Satan was spreading out before him all his future life, and bidding him live to do good. *There* he stood before his accusers and his judges almost persuaded to yield.

Faith triumphed. He escaped the snare, and declared himself ready to die. He was condemned to be burned alive.

On the 15th of June, 1532, St. Stephen's Place was crowded by an immense concourse of people who came to see him die. The clergy were beheld coming in procession. There were judges, priests, monks, executioners, in great pomp, displaying all the ceremonies usual on such occasions. Much time was occupied in the different forms, and during all these long hours the martyr was engaged preaching the Gospel to the people, or making replies to the monks.

According to custom, a pulpit was erected close by the stake where the accused was to be burned. A Dominican friar got into it to deliver what was then called *le sermon de la foi catholique*. He took for his text the first verse of the fourth chapter of Timothy's first epistle. He read the words: "Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to *seducing* spirits and doctrines of devils."

Here he stopped short. This of itself may have been a very good text for the friar's purpose ; but it was not finished, and had a most unfortunate conclusion. Caturce cried with a loud voice : "Continue the text ; finish reading it."

The Dominican seemed to be embarrassed, and was silent.

"If you do not wish to finish the passage I will do it for you," continued the martyr ; and in a full, strong voice, he concluded the text :

"Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron ; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of those which believe and know the truth."

It was often playing with edged tools for the Roman Catholics to deal much in Scripture before those men who had ventured everything to its teachings.

The Dominican was silent with rage and shame, and Caturce delivered, in the place of the sermon on the Catholic faith, a sermon on the Lutheran faith. He spoke with holy energy, and showed, in the heavenly eloquence which proceeds from a renewed heart, that he died only for having wished to be faithful to the teachings of the primitive Church. His scholars, who were listening, were deeply touched. They had once learned from him the science of law. Now they were learning the way of salvation. He died praising God in the flames.

Where was Margaret de Valois while these things were passing ?

Not able to serve all, but doing what she could to protect the Protestants ; one day interceding with the king her brother, the next encouraging some fainting Christian.

Soon after Caturce's death she published a religious work which she had written herself, called, "The Mirror of the Sinful Soul" (*Le Miroir de l'Ame Pécheresse.*) It was soon in the hands of almost every one, not escaping the keen eyes of Bedier and the Sorbonne. It was immediately attacked by them most bitterly, even from the pulpit, and with a rage which prompted them to make use of personalities.

Margaret complained to her brother, who, as we have already hinted, was beginning to show some favor to the persecuting monks. Giving himself up to his pleasures, Francis I. cared little either for the pope or the Bible, beyond what was of direct interest to himself; but he was indignant that one so near the throne should be attacked by the priests. A number of those who had been most forward were prosecuted and imprisoned, and Bedier himself was banished from the court. This gave new courage to the Reformers, and some who had fled returned to Paris. Any favorable dispositions, however, on the part of the king toward the Protestants which might yet linger round his heart, were soon to disappear. It came about thus:

On the 13th of October, 1533, Clement VII. made his solemn entry into the city of Marseilles. This pope, old in years and infirm, brought with him his niece, a young and beautiful woman. By birth and education an Italian, she possessed every accomplishment which wealth and a high position could procure for her. Every eye was fixed upon her, and no one, to behold that lovely countenance, would ever suppose that she was afterward to become celebrated for her ingenuity and boldness in crime; that the present Duchess of Urbin was to become Catharine de Medicis, the mother of Charles IX.

The cunning pope said that he had come to Marseilles to present his niece to Francis I. But this was only the apparent reason. The real one was to make the king a more thorough Romanist, and to destroy the influence of Margaret de Valois. For this purpose he had calculated rightly that his fair companion would be a valuable assistant.

The first public interview of the two monarchs was one of great pomp. It took place in the presence of the great dignitaries of the court of Rome and of France. The pontiff, dressed in great splendor, was seated on a high and glittering throne. The king of France, with his head uncovered, advanced toward him, knelt before the holy father, then swore obedience to him, and kissed his feet, afterward his hand, and was finally allowed the exalted privilege of kissing him on his face. The eldest son of the king was permitted to enjoy the same favors, but the two younger sons were only allowed to kiss his feet and hands. The pope's old and shriveled face was denied to them. It must have been a sad disappointment to the two boys. The grandes of the court were only allowed to kiss the sacred feet. The sub-nobility were allowed to take a look at them. The Archbishop of Paris, in the name of Francis, then addressed the pope as follows:

“The very Christian king, as the eldest son of the Church, acknowledges him in all humility and devotion as pontiff and true vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ, venerates him as successor of St. Peter, and promises to him obedience and fidelity; offering himself with all his powers for the defense of his holiness and of the holy apostolical see, as his predecessors have done.”*

* Sismondi, Hist. des Français, tom. xvi, p. 429.

In due time, with marks of great mutual affection, the two potentates separated.

Francis I. did not always keep his promises, but this time he was too faithful. As he returned from Marseilles, he sent from Lyons to the Archbishop of Paris letters containing the following words: "To prosecute all those whom it was possible to convict of the crime of heresy, who multiply and increase in the good city of Paris."

This was on the 10th day of December, 1533, not two months after the entry into Marseilles of his holiness. From this time Francis was cured of any proclivities toward the Reformation.

Who will say that the old pope did not thirst for Protestant blood?

CHAPTER XII.

THE PLACARDS.

DURING much of the time in which we now find ourselves, Lefevre and Farel, strong in the faith, were laboring in Geneva. The good seed was bearing a great harvest in Switzerland, and parts of France bordering on that country. The progress the Reformation had there made gave its adherents power to destroy in important cities the superstitions of Rome, and to establish Protestant worship.

A man by the name of Feret, sent to Switzerland by the brethren in Paris, beholding their success returned, filled with zeal and a desire to imitate what he had seen. He succeeded in inspiring them with his own enthusiasm, and they resolved upon a proceeding, not only

imprudent, but injurious to the cause for which they were laboring. On the morning of the 18th day of October, 1534, the Parisians on awaking beheld their public places placarded with little tracts. They approached and read them. Great was their astonishment at beholding their mass attacked in a most violent manner by epithets abusive and insulting. Many who read were more indignant at the style than at the matter contained in the placards. Some who would have applauded an article by Melancthon against the mass, were full of anger against the authors of the papers they were reading, because they seemed to them imprudent and uncourteous. The following fragments are a specimen of their style:

“True articles upon the horrible, great, and insupportable abuses of the papal mass, invented directly against the holy supper of our Lord (only Mediator and only Saviour) Jesus Christ.”

“As hostile to God’s holy word, with good reason they ought to be rejected, and greatly detested.”

“They are not ashamed to put the body of Jesus in their wafers, and to allow him to be eaten by rats, and spiders, and vermin, as it is written in their missals: ‘If the body of the Lord should be consumed by mice and spiders, or a worm should be found in it, let it be burned and put in the relic box.’ O earth, why do you not open to engulf these horrible blasphemers? O detestable villains! Is this the body of the Lord Jesus, true Son of God? Is he eaten by the mice and by the spiders? He who is the bread of angels and the child of God, is he given to us to make meat for beasts? O miserable wretches, if there is no other evil in your infernal theology, but that you speak irreverently of the precious body of Jesus, how greatly would you merit the fagots and the fire, you blas-

phemers and heretics, the greatest in the world ! Light then your fagots to burn and roast yourselves, not us, because we do not wish to believe in your idols, your new gods and false Christs, which are eaten by beasts and you alike ; you who are worse than beasts, in your trifling about your god of paste."

Francis I., on his return from Blois, found one of these papers put up at the door of his room. He was in a transport of rage ; he could not comprehend how any one dared to offer him such an insult, and swore that he would punish the guilty. The pope was thus finding a powerful ally in the rash imprudence of the Reformers.

The placards, as they were called, soon began to exhibit their results. Michael Morin, a man dissolute in life and renowned for the ability with which he captured heretics, and, when captured, convicted them, was brought to court to attend to this business. The prisons in a little while were gorged with men and women accused by him, many of them from the most noble families of France.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BALANCOIRE.

THREE months afterward a scene occurred which showed with a terrible distinctness the dispositions of the king.

On the morning of the 21st day of January, 1535, in the midst of an immense concourse of people, a religious procession issued from the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. At its head marched the priests, clothed in glittering robes, carrying in little trunks

the relics of St. Germain, and St. Landry, and of St. Genevieve. For this solemn occasion the holy chapel had opened all its treasures, and, for the first time since St. Louis, his relics, so renowned, were brought out of their sacred resting-place to adorn the procession. Among them was displayed, as worthy of the most prominent place, the head of St. Louis. Old men, as they looked at the imposing and splendid scene, could not remember that they had ever beheld anything so striking. Bishops, mitered abbots, monks, religious orders of all kinds were there represented. The college of the Sorbonne was there in all its dignity. After the Sorbonne came Du Bellay, bishop of Paris, carrying in his hands the holy sacrament. Francis I. followed, bareheaded, carrying in his hands a large wax torch. After the king appeared the princes, princesses, dukes, counts, and ambassadors. With a slow and solemn step the procession went through the principal parts of the city, and halted in six of its principal places, in each of which a magnificent altar had been erected for the holy sacrament.

Thus far the Romish clergy appeared as worshipers, according to the peculiar pomps and ceremonies of their Church. More than this, however, is the object of all this magnificent display.

By the side of each altar there is seen a gibbet, and fagots ready to be lighted. Michel Morin, the grand purveyor of the *fête*, had provided six Lutherans for the occasion, one for each altar. The people seemed hardly able to contain their joy in the anticipation of beholding their death.

Such a scene explains the horrible eagerness of the murderers of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr.

In this atrocious and sacrilegious drama the Luther-

ans appeared most intrepid and courageous. God sustained them wonderfully. Not one of them showed any signs of fear; but all with a loud voice glorified the Saviour, for whom they were about to die. It was for their faithfulness to him that they were thus exposed as a spectacle, and delivered into the hands of men more cruel than savage beasts. And yet, when they gathered round them closely, and beheld the mildness and serenity of these martyr heroes, mingled with their decision, there were signs of pity shown in that moving mass of people. Perhaps they would have saved them if it had not been for one man. That man was the king, who on this occasion became himself the executioner.

He had decided that the Lutherans should be tied to a beam, placed seesaw, which should lower so as to plunge the victims in the flames and then should rise immediately, and thus prolong their suffering until the fire should burn the cords which bound them, and they should fall into it.

They waited until the king came to the spot, so that he might see the tortured men as they were lowered into the fire. Francis then at each station gave his own torch to the Cardinal of Lorraine to light the flames, and immediately joined his hands and humbly prostrated himself, imploring the divine pity upon his people, until the death agonies were over. Six times he, who was called the father of letters, passed his torch to the cardinal, six times he prayed for his people, and six times he waited until the dying struggles of the victims were over.

The procession, which started at the Church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, came at length to St. Genevieve, where a mass was sung, to thank God for the blessings which he had poured upon the Church.

Immediately after the procession there was a splendid banquet in the archbishop's palace. After it was over the king made an address in which the following passage occurs:

"I pray you to put out of your hearts and out of your thoughts all opinions which would seduce you, and that you will instruct your children and servants in Christian obedience to the Catholic faith; and that if you know any one infected by this perverse sect, whether parent, brother, or cousin, you will reveal him, for by silence you become his accomplice. As for myself, your king, if I knew of one of my members stained by this detestable error, not only would I deliver it to you to cut off, but *more yet, if I perceived that one of my children was tainted, I would myself sacrifice him.* And because this day, I know you to have a good will toward Jesus Christ, I pray you to persevere. In doing so I will live with you as a good king, and you with me as good faithful Christians and Catholic subjects, in peace, repose, and tranquillity."*

And this is the man who once listened to the Gospel with pleasure; a man whom Margaret de Valois yet loved as her brother.

Some historians think that the placards turned Francis I. from the reform. They may have influenced him, but the true causes were further back in his history than this event. As we have already said, he had turned his heart from the light, and the light which was in him became dark. Added to this was the fear that, after the Church, the Protestants would attack the throne. The visit of Clement VII. and Catharine de Medicis finished the work.

* Puaux, *Histoire de la Ref. Franc.*, vol. i, p. 210, etc. Sismondi, *Histoire de France*, annee 1585.

On the 25th day of January, 1535, four days after the grand procession we have referred to, a royal edict appeared commanding the extirpation and extermination of the Lutheran sect and other heresies.

In this year another event took place which had a great influence upon the Reformation in France. The Institutions of the Christian Religion, by John Calvin, were published when the author was but twenty-six years of age, "a work which," it has been said, "has placed Calvin upon a pedestal from which his enemies have failed to dislodge him; a work which has made the Reformation in France what it is at the present day."

CHAPTER XIV.

DECREE AGAINST CABRIERES AND MERINDOL —
BANQUET AT AIX — THE COUNCIL CHAMBER —
THE COLPORTEUR.

BETWEEN the years 1535 and 1540, the events which took place were so similar that the narration of one is a description of others. Martyrs were arrested and burned. They triumphed in their sufferings. And still the priests perceived that the so-called heresy was not destroyed.

Upon the borders of the Durance there lived a people who had been driven from Piedmont by persecution, consisting of about eighteen hundred souls. Their principal villages were Cabrières and Merindol. For two centuries they had been here engaged in

agriculture, and were distinguished as much for their integrity, as for their dislike to the superstitions of Rome. The rough and sterile lands on which they dwelt had been transformed by them into fertile fields.

Living, as it were, in the midst of Roman Catholics, it was strange that they had been left so long in comparative quiet. It is true that some of them had been executed or otherwise punished, but the mass of the people had not been disturbed. Their time had now come.

Merindol was cited to appear, by fifteen of its principal inhabitants, before the Parliament at Aix. Certain of the fate which awaited them, they did not go. On the 18th of November, 1540, a decree was made which condemned ten of them to be burned alive, their wives, children, parents, and servants to be banished, and Merindol itself to be burned, demolished, and rendered uninhabitable.

Some scenes which occurred only a few days after the passage of this decree will not only show how it was regarded, but will place before the reader the manners of the people at this era more strikingly than any formal description.

Around a table at Aix, covered with the most delicate viands, were seated high dames of fortune, priests, magistrates, and nobles. Among the guests were the President Chassannée, the Archbishop of Aix, and a young lady claimed, by common report, to be the mistress of the good bishop. During the banquet she asked of the president when the execution of the decree against Merindol was to take place. The president pretended that he did not hear.

“What decree?” asked a gentleman who was

present. The young lady gave an account of its substance.

"You are inventing a fable for us, Mademoiselle," said the Lord of Alenc, a man of true piety; "if such a decree has been made, it has only been made by a parliament of women."

One of the counselors of the Parliament, the Lord of Senas, answered :

"You are in error, Monsieur d'Alenc; what Mademoiselle has told you is not a fable, and I think that you would not call the Parliament of Aix a parliament of women."

The Lord of Alenc protested his respect for the sovereign court, and the Lord of Beaujeu spoke out and said :

"This decree would astonish the savages and Turks. I have never heard anything but good of the people of Merindol. But here is Monsieur le President, who can tell us better than the women what it is."

Before Chassannée had time to reply, the young lady looked at the archbishop and said :

"I would have been much astonished if there had not been found some one in this company to defend these miserable Lutherans;" then raising her eyes, she added in a louder voice, "If it pleased God that all the Lutherans who are in Provence, nay, even in France, had horns in front, we would see many horns."

The Lord of Beaujeu, casting on her a look of contempt, replied :

"Might it please God that all the mistresses of the priests should gabble like geese."

"Monsieur de Beaujeu, it is not decent to talk against the Church. Remember that no dog ever barked at the crucifix without going mad."

The archbishop began to laugh, and touching the young lady on the shoulder, said :

“ By my holy orders, you amuse me. You, Monsieur de Beaujeu, retain the lesson she has given you.”

“ I have nothing to do but to go to her school and yours! And if I should say that the most of bishops and priests are dissolute in their manners, I would say nothing against the holy Church, unless a person goes mad for speaking the truth.”

The archbishop colored with anger :

“ Monsieur de Beaujeu, you will render an account of your words against the Church in the proper time and place.”

“ I wish it might be to-day, my lord, and I will prove much more than I say.”

Another nobleman now interposed :

“ Let us lay aside,” said he, “ these troublesome subjects. We are at the table, not to dispute but to enjoy ourselves. By my friendship for you restrain yourself for the future in these three things : *First.* Do not regard the Lutherans. *Second.* Do not reprove the ladies in their little pleasures too sharply. *Third.* Do not look too closely at the lives of the ecclesiastics if you would obey the injunction, ‘ *Touch not mine anointed—Nolite tangere meos Christos.*’ ”

Much more was said, and the banquet finally ended in a tumult.

Such scenes as these are sufficient to show that not all the Roman Catholics approved of the persecution against the Protestants. And it must not be supposed that all the priests and monks did so. On the contrary, it was true in those days, as it was in the time of the apostles, “ a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” While in France the cradle

of the Reformation was a university, in Germany it was a monastery. And if there is any one in whom a lover of the Bible has a right to feel more interested than another, is it not a priest of Rome when he begins to inquire the way out of the labyrinth of superstitions in which he has been educated?

There were monks yet in the Church who did all they could to save the Reformers. This is illustrated by the following incidents :

It was not many days after the events just narrated, when a grand council of ecclesiastics met at Avignon, to devise measures by which the decree against Merindol might be enforced. The Archbishop of Aix presided, who opened the session in these words: "Men, fathers, and brethren, you know that a great tempest has risen against the Church of Jesus Christ, and that the waves dash against it with such fury that its destruction is threatened. The tempest comes from the north. The offerings of the people cease; the pilgrimages are less frequent; the devotions are lukewarm, and charity itself has grown cold everywhere. That which is most alarming is, our authority declines, our jurisdiction is misunderstood, and the laws of the Church are despised. Ordained by God to watch over kingdoms and people, we ought to use all our power to destroy the Lutherans, those foxes which mar the Lord's vineyard, those whales which are endeavoring to sink the ship of the Son of God. We have well commenced in obtaining a decree against the miserable heretics of Merindol; but it is necessary to execute it. Let us hasten, and spare neither time nor gold, so that God, in the day of judgment, may not reproach us for having neglected to make to him this favorable sacrifice. As to myself, I am ready; I place at your disposition a

hundred men, well armed and well equipped, to serve until the Vaudois shall be completely destroyed.”*

The prelate was silent. A murmur of approbation, which rose from nearly every part of the assembly, showed him that his words had found an echo. After some moments of silence, a Dominican monk, by the name of Bassinet, who was a doctor of divinity, arose, and said, that nothing should be done in haste, for fear that the inhabitants of Merindol should be wrongfully put to death; that a deep examination of the heresies for which they were reproached had led him to believe that the faith of the heretics was conformed to that of the Holy Scriptures; that it seemed to him wise and prudent to desist from past rigors, and simply to punish, by pecuniary fines and banishment, those who spoke against the Church and the pope; and that, in reference to those who should appear by the Holy Scriptures to be heretics and obstinate blasphemers, they could apply to them the punishment of death or perpetual imprisonment.”

What courage it must have required to utter such words in such an assembly! They were received with a murmur of disapprobation.

“O man of little faith!” cried the archbishop; “wherefore hast thou doubted? Ah, master! you repent of having well done. And do you not know that you have spoken words which smell of the sulphur and the fire?”

“Master,” said the Bishop of Arles, “can any one speak better of the Church than the Archbishop of Aix?”

The Dominican was not embarrassed, but rose again to speak. After having referred to the Pharisees, who, in the days of Jesus Christ, overthrew the law

* *Histoire de la Ref. Fran.*, par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 39, 40.

by their traditions, he boldly showed that the priests were their successors, and then added :

“ Because I must speak the truth, and as you call me master in Israel, I will maintain by the Holy Scriptures that this great pilot and patron of whom we speak, our holy father the pope, his episcopal sailors and seamen, who have abandoned the ship of Jesus Christ [Gospel ship] to embark in skiffs and brigantines, are pirates and corsairs of the sea, false prophets and destroyers, and not pastors of the Church of Jesus Christ.”

These words, spoken with great energy, produced a storm of anger on the part of the great majority of the assembly.

“ Get out of here, wicked apostate!” cried the archbishop. “ Thou art unworthy of being in this company. Many, who have not merited as much as thee, have been burned. These monkish beggars and rascals spoil all.”

These last words were received as an insult by the mendicant orders, who complained of the outrage thus offered to them. Such confusion ensued that the discussion could not be continued, and the session broke up.

After dinner the assembly again met. To avoid what had occurred in the morning the inferior monks were excluded. Only the doctors who were abbots were admitted. There was no difficulty now, and it was unanimously decided, at all hazards and at all costs, to proceed to the execution of the decree. To the archbishop was confided the whole management of the affair, who wished to set out that very day on his pious mission. A great banquet, however, which was to take place the next day, detained him.

We follow the zealous ecclesiastic from the council

chamber to the feast; and behold him, full of life and spirit, mingling in those gay amusements, where, if he could meditate piously upon the maxims of the Church, he could not very well upon some which Christ had given. Such as: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment;" and, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate;" and, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God."²

The banquet was a magnificent affair, worthy of an archbishop. The viands were costly and delicate, the wines were old and of a rare quality, and the most beautiful women of Avignon were present. After the repast there were dancing and the sports usual on such occasions.

Afterward the high prelates of the Church went out to take a walk with the ladies. Passing by the street *des Changes*, they stopped before a store to look at some obscene pictures which were hung out for sale. The true successors of the apostles in the holy apostolic Church then bought a number of the pictures, which they presented to the ladies who were with them.

Continuing their walk, they came to a bookseller's stand. The prelates in passing stopped a moment, as they beheld some suspicious looking books. They regarded them more closely. They were not mistaken. Lying on the stall for sale were French and Latin Bibles, which any one who had the means might buy.

"Who has given you permission to sell these books? Do you not know that their sale is forbidden?"

"The books that I sell," answered the other, "are they not of more value than the pictures you have bought for these ladies?"

"I hope I may lose my share in paradise if this man is not a Lutheran!" cried the Archbishop of Aix.

He caused him to be immediately seized and led to prison. All the way crowds of people followed him, hooting and shouting. Some cried, "To the fire with him! to the fire with him!" Others vociferated, "The Lutheran! the Lutheran!"

Here one spit in his face; there another pulled his beard, and at every step some outrage was committed on him. Bruised and wounded, and covered with blood, he arrived at the palace jail. His trial was not long. A few questions were asked him, which he answered with a most wonderful presence of mind, confounding his adversaries by the words of Scripture. One of the judges, whose name was Laber, with some others, endeavored to save him, alleging that the punishment of death was too great for the crime of having sold the Holy Scriptures. It was in vain. Sentence was pronounced against him.

The same day that he was arrested he was tried, condemned, and executed. It was a glorious day for the martyr. He began it by distributing the word of God; he ended it by dying for Christ.

Having been conducted to the stake, that the cause of his death might be known to all men, two Bibles were hung around his neck, one in front and the other at his back, and were burned with him. The torch was applied to the wood, the flames gathered around him, but his countenance and voice showed no signs of pain. A heavenly peace was stamped upon his features, and to the last sigh he continued to exhort the witnesses of his death to search diligently the Scriptures.

CHAPTER XV.

A ROMAN CATHOLIC'S TESTIMONY.

ALL through France numerous executions are now taking place for the crime of heresy. We can only refer to one here and there as illustrations of the rest. In the year 1542 a letter was written by a Roman Catholic to one of his friends, in which he relates, with great candor, the circumstances connected with the death of a young man, which show the power of God's grace to support the soul in the hour of death. The letter is dated July 10, 1542. We give an extract from it:

"You ask me, my very honored friend, to communicate to you exactly what I have been able to ascertain as to the Lutherans condemned to be burned.

"I have seen two executions of them myself. . . . If you had been there you would have wished that their punishment might have been less rigorous. . . .

"The first was a very young man, yet without beard; the down had hardly come upon his chin. The people supposed he was not yet twenty years of age. He was the son of a shoemaker. The other was an old man over sixty, already feeble with age, of a venerable figure, and with a long white beard.

"The young man had said things which seemed wrong concerning miraculous images, (here they not only venerate them, but run from all parts to adore them.) He had maintained that there was little difference between them and the gods of stone which the heathens used, and that they ought to be removed from Christian temples if they became an occasion

of idolatry. He was accused of having said other things which resembled the doctrines of Luther.

“When they exhorted him to recant, so far from doing so, he declared that he was ready to confirm, even by his death, what he had said. He was led before the judges, and condemned to have his tongue cut out, and afterward to be burned. . . .

“Without changing countenance the young man presented his tongue to the knife of the executioner, putting it out as far as he was able to do. The executioner drew it out further with pincers, cut it off, and struck the martyr with it several times on the cheek. It is said that some in the crowd who were near him (*O pitié des Français!*) picked up the tongue and threw it at the young man. Being placed afterward on a cart he was drawn to the place of punishment. But to see him one would have said that he was going to a festival. He descended voluntarily and alone from the cart, and placed himself beside the post which was to be the instrument of his execution. When they had placed the chain around his body, and when the crowd surrounded him with insults, the serenity with which he bore their mockings, and the whole expression of his features were indescribable. He uttered no sound, but from time to time spit out the blood which filled his mouth, and directed his eyes toward heaven, as if he expected further miraculous succor. When they had covered his head with sulphur, the executioner showed him the fire with a threatening air; but the young man, without being dismayed, made a movement of his body to show that he was willing to be burned. In truth, dear Cassander, I doubt whether the illustrious philosophers who have written so much upon the contempt of death would have supported it with equal

constancy in the midst of such cruel torments. Indeed, this youth appeared to be raised above what is human.”*

CHAPTER XVI.

MASSACRE OF CABRIERES AND MERINDOL.

AFTER various delays, during which many vain efforts were made to draw the inhabitants of Merindol into the Roman Church, during which the president Chassannée himself interposed in their behalf, and Francis I. granted them a respite, that they might recant, an order was obtained from the king to execute the decree.

Over four years had passed in the mean time. Chassannée was dead, and was succeeded by the Baron D’Oppède, a man already renowned for his cruelty. On the ninth day of January, 1545, the new president received the royal letters patent. But, that he might be sure of his prey, D’Oppède waited until an opportune absence of M. de Grignam, governor of Provence, should place him first in authority there, and should put under his authority the armed force then in the service of the governor.

It was the 12th of April, 1545, that the president assembled the Parliament, and exhibited, and caused to be read to them, the letters patent of the king. Without any objection being made, commissioners were appointed. They were François de la Fond, Honoré de Tributiis, and Bernard de Badet. Guerin, a lawyer, was to fill the place of the absent procurator-general, and D’Oppède himself, at his own request,

* Histoire de la Ref. Franc., par F. Puaux, vol. i, pp. 281, 282.
Hist. Réformation.

had the direction of the whole matter. "Thus," says the writer from whom we quote, "the magistrate becomes the executioner."

The very next day the soldiers were in motion, and only four days after, on the 16th of April, 1545, Captain Poulain, under the orders of the president, began the burning of the villages of Papin, Cabrierette, La Mothe, and Saint Martin, where the poor workmen were killed without resistance; women and young girls were violated, and then, with the little children, murdered without pity. In many cases the breasts of women were cut off, and afterward their little children were beheld, beside their dead bodies, dying of hunger, the president having forbidden any nourishment to be given to them.

On the 17th and 18th the villages of Lourmarin, Villelaure, and Treizemines were burned. No one was found in them. On the other side of the Durance, Genson and Laroque were burned, from which the inhabitants had also fled.

At nine o'clock in the morning of the 18th of April D'Oppède arrived at Merindol, where he found no one but a young countryman, named Morisi Blanc, who was tied to a tree and shot, and the village, consisting of over two hundred houses, burned.

On the 19th Cabrières was besieged. On the 20th it was agreed that if the people would surrender their lives and property should be given to them. About sixty men, unarmed, and thirty women, came out of the village, depending on the promise made to them. No sooner were they near enough than D'Oppède and his followers rushed on them, bound twenty-five or thirty, and led them to a neighboring field, where they were in cold blood chopped literally to pieces by the soldiers. The rest of the men were

carried off to Marseilles, Aix, and Avignon. The women were shut up in a barn, which was fired at the four corners, and when any opening appeared they were driven back with pikes. Entering the city, and hunting through cellars and concealed places, every one was killed without mercy. No respect was paid to either women or children. The number killed here was estimated at eight hundred.*

Those who escaped wandered in the mountains, and concealed themselves in caves and clefts of the rocks. In their distress they asked D'Oppède to give them permission to depart with their wives and children to the cities of Germany, where they could serve God according to their faith. "We will give up everything to you," they said; "fields, houses, and furniture. We will carry off nothing."

D'Oppède refused even this. "I know what I ought to do with the people of Merindol," said he. "I want to take them all, and send them to hell with all the devils; both them and their wives and their children. I will make such a destruction of them that I will blot out their memory forever."

There was one, however, who had not forsaken these suffering Christians. God was with them. It is in this point of their history that one of their religious services is described to us, as they assembled together to ask help from Him who is mighty to save.

They read first the Holy Scriptures, and then prayed to God that he would not abandon them in the day of their trials. An old man then rose and said:

"The least solicitude that we ought to have is that for our property and our lives. But what we ought to fear is, that by torments and by our infirmities we may

* *Histoire de la Ref. Franc.*, par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 247-249, etc.

fail in confessing our Lord Jesus Christ and his Gospel. It is for this that we have need to turn our eyes from the earth to the heavens, that God may grant us the grace to persevere in his holy doctrine. As for us, let us be firm, though the nations of the earth may turn from the true religion and become idolators by following Baal. Let us be firm, and neither bombardments nor cannon can shake our faith."

A second rose and said: "If the Son shall make us free, we shall be free indeed; and though, even, we may walk through the valley and shadow of death, we will fear no evil, for the Lord is with us. It is he himself who says to us, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' Let us not fear those who kill the body, and cannot kill the soul, but let us fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Instead of abandoning the law, the ordinances, and the doctrine of the Gospel, let us remember constantly this saying of the Saviour: 'He that persevereth unto the end shall be saved.'"

A third spoke of their past deliverances, ending with these words: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Let us be ready to die."

A fourth rose: "If it be the Lord's will to save us he will do it. Let us not then be troubled as to what man can do to us. If we must die, let it be without fear, for the Lord will give us a celestial habitation, in which there shall be no poverty, no misery, no tears, no weeping, but joy and eternal happiness; let us then rejoice in our tribulations, knowing that our sadness shall be turned into rejoicing, and that when the wicked shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth, we shall be in everlasting felicity."

As they thus spoke the blessed Comforter promised

by our Saviour was there among them. Tears, more of joy than sorrow, flowed plenteously, and it seemed almost as if a voice spoke to them from Heaven :

“I will not leave thee.”

The young men then spoke, and encouraged their brethren to faithfulness. And before their assembly closed they all felt new courage, and resolved afresh to suffer all things from their implacable enemies rather than renounce the faith which gave to them the strength and joy which now dwelt in their hearts.

What became of these faithful men ? Some died on the rocks and mountains of hunger, some of cold, some of fatigue, some from the excitement produced by a constant dread of being seized, and some escaped to strange countries, where they could worship God according to their conscience.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT— A CONGREGATION SURPRISED — FOURTEEN MARTYRS.

THE same year in which the inhabitants of Cabrieres and Merindol died for Christ, the famous Council of Trent opened its sessions.

March 11, 1545, was the day appointed for the grand assemblage of the representatives of all the clergy of Romanism of every nation.

When the cathedral opened its gates to receive the assembled clergy three bishops only were present. Fearing that it would furnish their adversaries with an occasion to reproach them if they opened the ses-

sions of a great oecumenical council with such a small number, they resolved to wait a few days until reinforcements arrived. The few days were extended to about nine months, and on the 13th of December, 1545, the Cardinal del Monte celebrated a solemn mass, the Bishop of Bitonte preached a sermon, other ceremonies were observed, the decree for the convocation was read, and the question then asked,

“Is it your desire that the council should be opened?”

Each one replied :

“*Placet.*”

And it lasted nineteen years !

It had been sitting but a little over two months when one day a courier arrived at Trent with news which caused among the bishops a universal transport of joy.

Luther was dead !

Their great enemy died on the 18th of February, 1546.

Returning to France we behold at the city of Meaux, on the eighth day of October, 1546, a scene which merits our attention.

It was where Briçonnet had preached the Gospel. It was where he so shamefully fell. It was the city of the martyr, John Leclerc, and where the clergy had thought themselves masters of the field.

They were mistaken. The word of God grew, and Christians multiplied under its teachings. They worshiped in lonely and solitary places, but the danger which was continually hanging over their heads helped to give life to their meetings. They had formed a Church, and appointed one Pierre Leclerc as their minister, under whose pious and faithful ministrations the number of members constantly

increased, so that at times from three to four hundred met together. It was then very difficult for them to remain concealed. They were advised to be on their guard.

On the 8th of September, 1546, they had met in the house of one of their number, whose name was Mangin. Leclerc was explaining to them a passage from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, when suddenly the lieutenant of the city, accompanied by his sergeants, presented themselves before the astonished assembly.

“Wherefore so many people?” said he to Leclerc. “Why are they gathered here instead of going to their parish churches?”

“To hear the word of God,” replied the pastor; “will you wait until we finish?”

“To prison with you,” quickly answered the lieutenant.

“Let us go where God pleases,” said Leclerc.

The sergeants, on the order of their chief, bound the pastor and sixty-two persons, consisting both of men and women. A young girl, indignant at such treatment for being found in such company, said to the lieutenant:

“If you had found me in some place of sin you would have been far from binding me thus.”

“Be silent,” was his only answer.

He gave the signal of departure. It was a sad spectacle to behold those sixty-two Lutherans as they walked chained together without resistance to their prison, singing the seventy-ninth psalm as they marched:

“O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps:

“The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy servants unto the beasts of the earth.

“Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them.

“We are become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.”

How appropriate were such words to their condition!

“Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name.

“Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die.”

A few days afterward they were brought before the Parliament at Paris, and fourteen of them were condemned to undergo the torture, and then to be burned alive near the house of Mangin, where they had been surprised engaged in their forbidden worship. Their property was also confiscated. The others, with the exception of five who were discharged, were condemned to lighter punishments.

After their condemnation they were taken to different monasteries, and various efforts made to induce them to recant. Finding these efforts useless, they were delivered into the hands of the *Prévot des Maréchaux* to be led to Meaux.

It was a sorrowful journey to them. Exhausted, physically and mentally, by the various scenes through which they had passed, and looking forward to the fearful death they were about to suffer, their hearts sank within them. They were not less decided to brave all for Christ’s sake, but at that hour they

could not triumph. An unexpected circumstance seemed to impart new courage to them.

As they rode silent and pensive through the forest of Livry, suddenly a man presented himself before them and cried:

“Brethren, take courage! be not weary in giving testimony for the Gospel!”

As the wagons drove quickly on the unknown man began to run, and as he ran he raised his hand toward heaven and said to them:

“Brethren! brethren! remember Him who is above. Courage! courage!”

It seemed almost as if a voice spoke to them from God. The unknown man, who afterward turned out to be a weaver by the name of Cauberon, was immediately seized, and added to the number of the prisoners.

The day after their arrival at Meaux they were put to the torture. During this appalling proceeding they exhibited a wonderful patience. While the executioners worked even to fatigue, in dismembering their bodies, one of them cried out with a holy joy:

“Courage, my friends, courage! spare not this miserable body which has so often resisted the Spirit, so often resisted the voice of its Creator.”

The monks, in the midst of this horrible scene, never lost sight of what they called the salvation of the martyrs. At last they proposed to them to pronounce some words in the ear of the priest.

“If you will do this,” said they, “they will not cut your tongue off.”

Six of them, whether overcome by the agonies they were enduring or by fear, or whether the words they were to whisper appeared indifferent, consented, and were saved from this infliction preliminary to their

death. The others, greatly grieved at the compliance of their companions, could be moved neither by menaces nor promises.

They were taken from their prison, and started for the place of execution. Just as they left one of the officers said to Mangin :

“ Give me thy tongue.”

“ Here it is,” (*Le voilà*), he answered. It was immediately cut off. The poor man was, however, able to repeat three times :

“ *The name of God be praised!*”

He and their minister, Leclerc, were drawn upon a hurdle ; the others were honored with carts to draw them to the place of their last sufferings.

The sacrifice commenced. The monks sang in Latin, to drown, as much as possible, the voices of the eight victims still able to use their tongues, who now, in the midst of the fire, seemed endeavoring to make up for the feebleness of the moment by exhorting their brethren to constancy.

All was soon over, and nothing remained to be seen of these devoted men but their charred remains in the midst of the smoke and ashes.

They died just a month from the day on which they met to worship God in the house of Mangin.*

* Crespin Martyr en 1546. *Histoire de la Ref. Franc.*, par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 264, etc.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DEATH OF FRANCIS I.—MARGARET DE VALOIS.

It came at last the king's turn. He had been long suffering under an incurable disease. Splendid palaces and sumptuously furnished apartments could not cure him. Long nights, passed sleepless and in great pain, gave him time for reflection, but seemed to bring to him no true sense of his guilt in destroying his Protestant subjects. He died March 3, 1547.

There was one person who felt deeply the death of Francis. For forty days she shut herself up, and passed the time in prayers and tears. Margaret de Valois had too much loved her almost worshiped brother. Amid all his cruelties, amid all his vices, her affection had never failed, and she now wept for him, almost the only sincere mourner.

Francis was succeeded by his son, Henry II., who was twenty-eight years of age, and who had married Catharine de Medicis, the niece of Clement VII. The true queen, however, was the beautiful Diana de Poitiers, who, it is said, waited impatiently until the late king had breathed his last sigh, that she might enter in possession of her power. She was forty-eight years of age when Francis died, but years had scarce left their mark upon her beauty. Her intellectual powers were equal to her personal attractions, and ruling Henry as her ambition and passion led her, she became an implacable foe to the friends of the Bible. It would be no praise to them to be able to say that she was their friend.

“Pierre du Chatel, bishop of Châlons, pronounced

the funeral sermon of the king. It came near being a dangerous sermon for him. In eulogizing Francis he had exclaimed :

“ I am persuaded that after so holy a life, the soul of the king, on leaving his body, has been carried to heaven without passing through the flames of purgatory.”

The doctors of the Sorbonne, whose ears were extremely nice in detecting heresy, saw in this statement a virtual abandonment of one of their favorite doctrines ; for if one who was so openly and notoriously a sinner could escape purgatory, why could not all the world.

They prepared a complaint and sent it to the court. The bishop was saved by the presence of mind and wit of Jean Mendoze, high steward of the king, who met the deputies at the door of St. Germain and said to them :

“ Calm yourselves, gentlemen ; if you had known the good king, my master, as well as I did, you would have better understood the Bishop of Châlons. Francis was not a man to tarry long anywhere ; and if he did take a turn in purgatory, they never would have been able to persuade him to stay long there.”

Margaret de Valois, whose history we have not followed because, alas ! it became less connected with the Reformation as she grew older, did not long survive her brother. She died in the year 1549. We have admired her character, loved her memory, for she was a witness for Christ in the midst of every obstacle. She preserved her integrity and honor surrounded by a dissolute court. Her house afforded refuge to the Protestant exiles ; her money distributed the Bible ; but after all she failed greatly in one thing : she had not the decision of character

which was necessary in her high position. And this became more manifest as she advanced in years. More and more she conformed to the ceremonies of Rome, for she had never left the Church; and when she died, she died within its pale.

We tarry not to describe the persecutions and martyrdoms with which France was now filled. Henry II. inherited the faults of his father without his ability, and ruled by Diana de Poitiers and the High Constable of Montmorency, who hated the Lutherans more intensely than even Diana, he showed no mercy to heretics. The coronation of his queen, Catharine de Medicis, was honored by the burning of a number of them as an amusement suited to such an occasion. And the king condescended to be present, and granted them the favor of witnessing their sufferings.

CHAPTER XIX.

DEATH OF MICHAEL SERVETUS.

We proceed to notice an event which, though it occurred in Geneva, has an intimate connection with the Reformation in France.

John Calvin (properly Cauvin) since the year 1541 had found a refuge in that city. There he had labored with zeal and earnestness for God. With the eloquent William Farel by his side, he had devoted his time and talents to the cause of the Bible. A man perfectly sincere, and mighty with the pen, few were his match in argument. And too well he loved his favorite field, for he was constantly engaged in

religious controversies.* This was not the best way to spread the Gospel, and it was not the best example to set before his countrymen in France. Some have said the times in which he lived justified him in this course. It may be a palliation, but cannot be a justification of what is wrong in itself. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of meekness and of love, long-suffering, and gentleness. Religious disputation, sometimes necessary, sometimes useful, long and willfully persisted in, leads away from all these. John Calvin, now in controversy with the Roman Catholics, now with his brethren the Protestants, again with some ultra sectarians, found at length in his heart the same persecuting spirit which was then raging among the Romanists, and which, of all men, a French Protestant in those days should have been the last to receive or nourish.

Michael Servetus was a distinguished Spanish physician. Having adopted Unitarian doctrines as to the Deity, a number of letters passed between him and Calvin. The latter became irritated, and, in writing to Viret, we are astonished and grieved to find the following lines :

“ Servetus has written to me lately, and has joined to his letter an enormous volume of his reveries, warning me with a fabulous arrogance that we will see astonishing and unheard of things. He offers to come here if I wish ; but I will not pledge myself, for if he should come I will not suffer him, so far as I have power, to depart living.”†

He did come to Geneva, and on Calvin’s application

* The author of the article under the head of “ Calvin,” in the new American Encyclopedia, 1859, while eulogizing Calvin, says : “ He was engaged in perpetual theological disputations.”

† Henry de Berlin, Hist. de Calvin.

he was arrested, tried, and finally, on the 27th day of October, 1553, burned to death, the Reformer sanctioning the proceedings by which he suffered.*

This act has left a stain upon the memory of Calvin which no zeal, no ability, no reputation he has acquired can ever remove. It has indeed been turned into an accusation against Protestantism by those who have said that Protestants themselves persecute and burn as well as their adversaries. But it should be remembered that the case of Servetus is but one against the two millions and a half who have been slain by Rome; and that one not justified but condemned everywhere by the Protestant world, even by the friends of Calvin himself.

We come to the year 1559, in which the Protestants beheld with joy that the judges began to be more lenient in their punishments of heresy. In one case, by a decree of the chamber of Tournelles, some young persons who were convicted were only condemned to banishment.

This decree caused great commotion. The clergy appealed it to the general Parliament, and the king himself came to hear the deliberations, while the whole country looked on with anxiety for the result. Henry as he listened became exasperated at those who spoke in behalf of the prisoners, and before any conclusion was arrived at, caused the arrest of four of the speakers and threw them into the dungeons of the Bastile, and evoked the case before his own court, saying, that *for the future the great business of his reign should be the extirpation of heresy.* He undertook too much. He was soon afterward wounded in the eye at a tournament, and on the 10th of July, 1559, died of the injury he received.

* Histoire de la Ref. Franc., par F. Puaux, vol. i, p. 840, etc.

CHAPTER XX.

CAUSES WHICH PREVENTED THE REFORMATION
FROM SPREADING WIDER IN FRANCE.

BEFORE we conclude, we wish to give a reply to the following questions:

Why did not the Reformation make greater progress in a country which promised at first so much? Why does Romanism again prevail as we behold it at present?

The questions are nearly alike, and shall be taken as one. Our answer is threefold:

1. The friends of the Bible were discouraged by the lukewarmness or the apostasy of those professing to be Reformers who were high in station, such as Briçonnet and Margaret de Valois, and afterward Henry IV., and other illustrious names.

2. In France there was no powerful protector of the Protestant party as there was in Germany and England. In the latter country Henry VIII., bad as he was, threw off allegiance to the pope and broke his power. In Germany the noble Frederic, Elector of Saxony, to whom the crown of the empire was offered, always stood fearlessly by the side of Luther and his party. In France there seemed to be one person fitted by Providence to fill this place. It was Francis I., a monarch of enlightened views, and in many respects, during the first years of his reign, possessed of a kind heart. He dearly loved his sister, Margaret de Valois, who, as has been stated, had embraced Protestant principles, a fact which ought

to have led him to regard these principles with favor. More than a year's imprisonment in Spain, in the hands of Charles V., had given him ample time for reflection. A long separation from two of his children, whom he placed in the hands of Charles, to remain as hostages until he had fulfilled his solemn oath made at the time of his liberation, ought to have created in his heart sympathy for his suffering and persecuted subjects. But Francis returned to his kingdom to break his oaths, to falsify his promises; and, as if destroying his Protestant subjects was a congenial crime, he added this, as the pope and the priests instigated him, to perjury and falsehood.

Many years afterward, when the great Henry IV. came to the throne of France, a like opportunity of blessing his country seemed to be placed in his hands. He had been educated a Protestant. He was the grandson of Margaret de Valois, and seemed, like Esther, to have been brought to the throne for a special purpose—that he might lead the Reformation forward to new triumphs; but he joined himself openly to his enemies, and Rome triumphed. It is true that he protected the Protestants, that in his reign the edict of Nantes was published; but he could not undo the sad effect of his apostasy.

3. We have previously inserted a quotation from a French author, in reference to Calvin's Institutes, part of which is as follows: "A work which has made the Reformation in France what it is at the present day." This assertion, instead of being true in the sense in which the author intended, we fear is sadly and painfully true in another sense, and that Calvin's great abilities were used in a manner rather to repel than to attract those Roman Catholics who were sincerely seeking the light. He not only adopted,

as we have seen him practice them already, the harsh views of St. Augustine, that it was right to persecute and kill heretics, but he added to this the peculiar views of St. Augustine on predestination. That there may be no mistake in the minds of our readers, we give Calvin's own words:

"Predestination," says he, "by which God adopts some to the hope of life, and adjudges others to eternal death, no one, desirous of the credit of piety, dares absolutely to deny."

"Predestination we call the eternal decree of God, by which he hath determined in himself what he would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is fore-ordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man therefore being created for one or the other of these ends, we say he is predestinated either to life or to death."*

If Calvin had simply held these doctrines, and welcomed with the hand of fellowship and heart of love those who could not receive them, as his followers frequently do at the present day, we would have little to say. But when he unchurches and gags all who cannot stretch themselves to his Procrustean bed, by saying "no one desirous of the credit of piety dares absolutely to deny," we shudder as we think of such doctrines, and such enforcement of them, in those times which tried men's souls.

It is true that Luther held partially these views, but he never gave them the prominence that Calvin did. And we believe the more he advocated them, the more he injured the great cause in which he was engaged. Especially was this true in his unfortunate controversy with Erasmus on free-will.

* Calvin's Institutes, book iii, ch. xxi, Allen's Trans., vol. ii, pp. 404, 405.

And when the Synod of Dort, in the year 1618, affirmed in substance these doctrines, excluding and condemning the Arminians, it was a fresh blow to the Reformation, already a hundred years old. It is with a kind of relief that we read even in Calvinistic works that there was not a perfect unanimity in endorsing them by that celebrated assembly ; but that the English divines and a few others maintained that Christ died for all men.

Strange infatuation of the human heart, that while the Roman Catholics were censuring them, the Reformers should set up such a standard of doctrine, and then ostracize all who would not receive it.

But such views were not merely held by Calvin as incidents, but prominently thrust forth as a kind of doctrinal basis. We quote the remarks of a Calvinistic writer already referred to, who, speaking of the theological system of the Institutes of Calvin, says :

“ It emphasized the divine holiness rather than the divine love ; it made an abstract decree to take the central place which only Christ can rightfully fill ; but it is still the most complete system,” etc., etc.

“ The rational power of the work is owing to the fact that it carries one dominant idea through all parts of the system, the idea of the divine sovereignty,” etc.

“ This election can come only from God, and it includes only a part of the race, the rest being left to perdition ; election and perdition (the *horribile decretum*) are both predestinated in the divine plan ; that plan is a decree, and this decree is eternal and unchangeable.”

“ Such,” says he, “ was the stern anatomy of the system of predestination.”*

* New American Enc., 1859 : Article, John Calvin.

And such, we add, were the doctrines offered to those who were seeking the light as they emerged from the darkness of Romanism, embodied in a system, and stamped by the authority of those who were leaders in the Reformation. In contemplating them, we sympathize with Margaret de Valois as she beheld what she must believe if she left Rome. Who can tell what influence such doctrines, as they were thus enforced, may have had in turning Francis I. from the Reformation!

Here we pause. Though far from being an end of the persecutions of the Protestants in France—for the massacres of Vassy, of Sens, of St. Bartholomew, occurred afterward—yet to pursue their history further would require space beyond our purposed limits.

The year 1559 was a year of triumph to the French Reformers. And when, in 1859, the three hundredth anniversary of their Reformation was celebrated in France, thousands of hearts gratefully felt that Rome had no longer power to shed the blood of their compatriots in the name of Christ.

THE
REFORMATION IN ITALY.

THE

REFORMATION IN ITALY.

CHAPTER I.

SAVONAROLA.

ITALY, land of sculpture, painting, and of poetry ; Italy, with her beautiful cities and lovely climate ; Italy, with her long line of ancient and illustrious heroes, has given to us men, not a few, who have contended nobly for the truth of God, men who have lived and died for its defense.

It is true, the search for them must be comparatively difficult, because their adversaries have always held the civil and ecclesiastical power, and were unwilling to chronicle anything in their favor, and have again and again suppressed and destroyed such testimony ; but yet we find it even in the writings of those who have condemned them.

There was one man who led the van in the era of which we write. Girolamo M. F. M. Savonarola has been called the Luther of Italy. He is rather the Wiclif, the morning star of the Reformation in that country. Born in the year 1452, and dying in 1498, at the age of forty six, he was not permitted to behold the light which burst twenty-five years afterward upon the nations of Europe.

Early the Spirit of God moved upon his heart, and

early he sought a peace which was little known among the doctors of the Church, but which an inward conviction urged him to expect. Like Luther, he believed that the cell of a monk was the surest place to find it.

In his father's house the world and its allurements almost perpetually presided. It was a place of gayety, where the learned, and the wealthy, and the powerful assembled, and seemed to him a place in which it was impossible to live the religious life for which he sighed. His mental struggles increased, and soon became overwhelming and incessant.

Jerome, for that was the name by which he was most commonly known, at last decided to leave the paternal mansion and fly to a monastery. He was now over twenty-two years of age, and knowing that his father would oppose his purpose, he took the occasion of a grand festival, when his friends were engaged in the processions, and spectacles, to leave home.

On the 24th of April, 1475, he found refuge in a Dominican monastery at Bologna, as a candidate for the vows.

The next day he wrote to his father. Some passages in his letter will show his earnestness and sincerity. He says:

“ **MY HONORED FATHER**,—I doubt not that you grieve much for my departure, and the more because I left you secretly ; but I wish you to learn my mind and intention from this letter, that you may be consoled...

“ The reason which induces me to become a monk is this : in the first place the great wretchedness of the world, the iniquity of men, the violence, the adultery, the theft, the pride, the idolatry, the hateful blasphemy into which this age has

fallen, so that one can no longer find a righteous man. For this, many times a day with tears I chanted this verse:

“‘Heu fuge crudeles terras, fuge litus avarum.’

And this, because I could not endure the great distemper of some of the people in Italy; the more also, seeing virtue extinct, ruined, and vice triumphant. This was the greatest suffering I could have in this world; therefore daily I entreated of my Lord Jesus Christ that he would rescue me from this defilement. Continually I made my prayer with the greatest devotion, imploring God, saying: ‘Show me thy path, for to thee do I lift up mine eyes.’ Now God has been pleased in his infinite mercy to show it me; and I have received it, though unworthy of such grace. . . .

“Would it not have been most ungrateful if, having asked God to show me the straight path in which I should walk, when he deigned to point it out to me, I had not taken it? O my Saviour, rather a thousand deaths than that I should be so ungrateful, or so oppose thy will. . . .

“Then, dearest father, you have rather to thank our Jesus than to weep. . . .

“I could not have been so daring as not to yield to that kind voice, especially to my Lord Jesus, who says: ‘Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.’ Because I know you lament that I left you secretly, almost as a fugitive, let me tell you that such was my distress and the agitation of my inmost soul at quitting you, that if I had expressed it, I verily believe, before I could have

departed from you, my heart would have broken, and I should have changed my purpose and resolution; therefore do not wonder that I did not tell you....

“ Soon will these days pass in which the misery is present to us, and afterward I trust both you and I shall be consoled in this world by grace, and in the next by glory. Nothing remains, but that I request you, with manly fortitude, to comfort my mother, of whom I beg that, together with you, she will bestow her blessing on me, and I will ever pray fervently for your souls.”

About this time his sentiments were very sweetly expressed in a lyric, of which we give a verse or two as an example :

“ Heart! no more delaying!
 Heart! no more delaying!
 From love divine thus straying!
 “ Thine own, my heart! be never!
 Wouldst thou repose secure thee!
 In Jesus rest forever!
 Let not the false world lure thee;
 Whom it delights, assure thee,
 The Lord is he betraying.
 “ My heart! O haste to Jesus!
 Leave men to their disputing;
 His love alone can please us.
 To calm the storm transmuting,
 His love we'll prove how suiting,
 The world's dread fury staying.
 “ Heart! no more delaying!
 Heart no more delaying!
 From love divine thus straying.”*

He now applied himself to prayer and study. Soon he knew the Bible almost by rote, but was grieved to find the monks very far from what he expected them to be. His own life, however, was one of great

* Life of Girolamo Savonarola. London, 1843.

purity and piety, as acknowledged by Roman Catholic writers.*

He hesitated long before he would take the solemn vows of the priesthood upon him, and did not begin to preach until he was thirty-one years of age. This was in 1483, the year of Luther's birth. He ascended the pulpit of the Church of Lorenzo, in Florence. The congregation was large. Much was expected on account of the piety and reputation for learning of the preacher. He commenced his sermon; but his constrained carriage and his ungainly figure were very far from pleasing his hearers. A piping voice did not heighten any good effect of his sermon. He preached again, but with no better effect. Day after day the number of his hearers diminished, until at length only twenty-five were left, including women and boys. He seemed to know the cause himself, for he said afterward: "I had neither voice, lungs, nor style. My preaching disgusted every one. I could not have moved as much as a chicken."

He returned to his monastery greatly discouraged. This was the man who was afterward followed by such crowds of people that large churches could not contain them, and under the eloquence of whose words, his immense audiences burst out frequently into loud weeping.

He now applied himself more earnestly to the Bible, that he might understand more thoroughly, and feel more deeply, its truths. A burning zeal to communicate to others the joys which filled his own heart urged him to other attempts to preach, and to

* P. Quetif, Ambroise Catharin, Bzovius, Baron, Alexandre, Néri, Marsilo Ficia, Matthieu Toscan, Flaminius; also Biographie Universelle (French) in 84 vols.; published at Paris, 1825, vol. xl, p. 564.

constant efforts to improve his voice and elocution, until at length the power which he sought began to assert its sway over his audience.

Now the cathedral of Florence could not contain his enraptured listeners, and as his words poured forth "from the divine fountain of life," says one of his biographers, "the new light of Gospel truth surrounded his brows with a glory like the aureola of saints."

The same writer gives us some specimens of his preaching :

"People of Florence, give yourselves to the study of the Sacred Scriptures ! The first blessing is understanding the Sacred Scriptures. Let us publicly confess the truth ; the Sacred Scriptures have been locked up, their light has been almost extinguished among men ! Has it not been set aside ? left in the dust ? no longer studied ? Nothing has been attended to but poetry and vanities."

"Florentines, I say to the wicked, Ye know it is a proverb, 'Misery comes by sin !' Go, read ; when the Hebrews did right and loved God they had always prosperity ; on the contrary, when they committed iniquity God prepared a scourge for them ! Florence, what hast thou done ? What sins hast thou committed ? How dost thou stand before God ? Shall I tell thee ? Alas ! the measure is full ! thy plague is at its height ! Florence, it is full !"

"I can no more, my strength fails ! O slumber no longer, Lord, upon that cross ! Grant these our petitions, O Lord ! Look upon the face of thine anointed ! O glorious virgin ! O saints ! O ye blessed in Paradise ! O angels ! O archangels ! O all ye company of heaven ! intercede for us with the Lord, that he delay not to be gracious to us."

“Stretch forth, stretch forth thy hand, thy mighty arm !”

“I can do no more. I think not what more to say. There is nothing left for me but to weep. I would dissolve in tears upon this pulpit. I ask not, O Lord ! that thou shouldest hear us for our merits, but for thy mercy, for the love of thy Son.”

At the conclusion he would frequently descend from the pulpit bathed in tears, amid the sobs and groans of the congregation.

We may well ask now what was the secret of his eloquence ? Was it a better knowledge of the Bible ? Doubtless this was an important help. Was it an improvement in his elocution and voice ? Doubtless this was also a help. But we cannot help believing that it was a mighty baptism of the same all powerful Spirit which rested upon John Wesley a hundred years ago, that now came upon the Roman Catholic monk.

We stop here a moment to notice the various opinions which have been entertained in relation to Savonarola.

By one author he has been called a cheat and a fanatic. By another it is said that *by pretensions to superior sanctity* and by a fervid eloquence he hurried away the feelings of his hearers. But other writers do him greater justice. That he was an errorist in some things we readily admit. Even yet he remained a Roman Catholic, as may be seen by the specimens of his sermons which we have given ; and it is doubtful if he ever succeeded in freeing himself from all the superstitions of Rome ; but that he was a sincere man, a true and devoted Christian, a noble patriot, we assert on the authority of the best informed historians.

Such preaching as we have described produced the same fruit which the true Gospel ever produces. A change in the manners of the people became visible, and Florence, formerly the most corrupt, became the most pious city of Italy.*

Another effect, which seldom fails to accompany the first, appeared also. Enemies began to appear on all sides. It was immaterial to them the good that was accomplished for their country. That Savonarola had for years, like a true citizen, contended for the liberty of Florence was no recommendation to them. That he had even kept aloof from Lorenzo de Medicis the Magnificent, who, however good he might be in many respects, Jerome thought was no true friend to his country ; and, after Lorenzo's death, that he had with all his eloquence pleaded for the republic and succeeded, was nothing to them.

They denounced him to the pope for preaching heresy, and the accusation was true, according to what was considered heresy by the chief pontiff at Rome.

CHAPTER II.

PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL—SAVONAROLA AGAIN.

We behold thus scenes that were transpiring in Florence only a few years before Luther's voice was heard in Germany. But even centuries before, all through Italy, there were many who sought the knowledge of the word of God. Dante and Petrarch had not been afraid to give a testimony, not a full

* Biographie Universelle, Paris, vol. xl, p. 565.

one, it is true, for the truth. Within the walls of Rome, that ancient city where the pope and cardinals sat upon their thrones and swept the streets with their robes, were men reading in secret the Book of God. In Padua, the seat of learning, where much that was useless received its name, was true wisdom sought. And in Venice, queen of the sea, where all that was beautiful and gay met in her ocean streets; where lofty palaces gave back the song of the gondolier, and where soft music gently fell upon her watery bosom "from morn to dewy eve;" where merchant princes assembled from various climes, and where the goddess of commerce sat upon her imperial throne, even there the humble, contrite heart looked to Jesus; and the music of his name floated on the waves, echoed in palace courts, penetrated the humble cottage, and was often the only light of some damp cell of the Inquisition.

In the magnificent streets of Milan and Genoa the devoted Albigeois passed and repassed each other, unallured by the pomp and luxury which surrounded them. Charged by their adversaries with abominable doctrines, such as disbelieving the Bible and rejecting marriage,* there is nothing for which they were more remarkable, their enemies themselves being judges, than for the purity and innocence of their lives. Among the hills and valleys of Italy these faithful men had lived for centuries; no doubt under some name they had had representatives since the time of Paul, and the rocks and mountains often resounded with the melody of their devotions. We are told that some of them came in the fourteenth century to Calabria, and settled in an uncultivated district of country. Soon the marks of a Protestant community

* French Catholic Encyclopedia, de l'Abbé Glaire, vol. xvii.

appeared in all directions ; the place assumed a new appearance ; villages arose in every direction ; the hills resounded with the bleating of flocks, and the valleys were covered with corn and vines.*

Let us return to Jerome Savonarola. The tiara was then upon the head of the infamous and profligate Alexander VI. Little cared he to be troubled by the trial of a monk for heresy. He would manage him in a more easy way.

One day he sent for a bishop of the Dominican order, the one to which Jerome belonged, and said to him :

“ I desire that, as a brother of the same order, you will answer the sermons of Savonarola, and controvert effectually their arguments.”

“ Holy father,” replied the bishop, “ I am prepared to fulfill your commands ; yet permit me to remark, that if I am to vanquish him I must be supplied with arms.”

“ Arms ! What arms ?” exclaimed the pope.

“ The monk,” continued the bishop, “ says we ought not to keep concubines, commit simony, or be guilty of licentiousness. If in this he speaks truly, what shall I reply ?”

“ What then must we do with him ?” inquired his holiness.

“ Reward him,” said the bishop ; “ give him a red hat ; make of him a cardinal and a friend at once. Send to him Ludovico, a man equally learned with himself, and let him argue with Savonarola, not forgetting, as his strongest argument, this offer, to be promised on condition that he abstains from prophesying, and recants what he has said and written.”†

* M'Crie, Ref. in Italy, p. 18 ; Perrin, Hist. des Vaudois, vol. i, pp. 196-198. Leger, Part II, p. 333.

† Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola, p. 242. London, 1843.

Brother Ludovico accordingly, in pursuance of the bishop's advice, came to Florence, and sought the humble cell of Savonarola.

Kindly and patiently, for three days, he listened to his arguments, and finally Ludovico offered him the cardinalate, but Jerome remained unconvinced.

"Come," said he, "to my sermon to-morrow morning, and you shall hear my answer."

Ludovico attended at the time appointed. The sermon commenced. With more earnestness than ever, the monk denounced the sins of the priests, and at last exclaimed :

"No other red hat will I have than that of martyrdom, colored with my own blood."

It is foreign to our subject to pursue all the particulars of the life of Savonarola, to describe the noble efforts which he made to preserve the liberties of his country, against renewed efforts of the family of the Medici. But no man, of all the list of Reformers in the countries of Europe, deserves more the interest of the reader than this Italian priest.

At last he was excommunicated by the pope, and forbidden to preach. For a while he obeyed; but the fire which had driven him to overcome all obstacles at first, again burned within him. He stood again in the pulpit, in defiance of the pope, while greater crowds than ever gathered round him, and spoke again to the people.

It was about this time that he preached against bad books, and with such success that the Florentines brought of their own accord, to "*la place publique*," great numbers of works containing licentious pictures, including copies of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, and made a bonfire of them.

The Franciscan priests now became furious, and

refused absolution, communion, and burial to all who attended Jerome's preaching. One of them went so far that, according to the custom of the times, he offered to decide with him their dispute in the ordeal by fire.

The piety and good sense of Savonarola prompted him to decline this offer, which he did at once. His friends, however, urged him to accept, or, to allow them to accept for him. Says one French author, "Nearly all the Dominican monks of the province of Savonarola, a crowd of priests and of seculars, and even women and children, begged the favor of going into the fire instead of Savonarola.* Even his sisters and other noble ladies offered themselves. Once, while walking in the garden of his monastery, a beautiful child came, bringing a note in its own handwriting, proposing to undergo the ordeal for him.

The child threw himself on the ground, and earnestly pleaded that he might be allowed to enter the fire. Savonarola was deeply moved, and said, "Rise, my son; this thy righteous purpose is very acceptable to God; see that thou continue in this good disposition."

At last Jerome consented, and the parties prepared for the ordeal.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRE ORDEAL.

ALL Florence was moved in expectation of the strange spectacle, and the whole of Italy waited, with great interest, to learn its result. It was decided that if the champion of Jerome should be burned, the latter should quit Florence within three hours,

* Biographie Universelle, vol. xl.

as an offender against the state. The time was in April, 1498. The names of the champions were, Dominico for Savonarola, and Rondinelli for the Franciscans. The latter, however, was not the one who had originally given the challenge. At twelve o'clock the immense crowds had assembled, in the streets, on housetops, and wherever there was any chance to see. The immense pile was all prepared for the fire. It was composed of faggots and brush-wood, and was nearly eighty feet long and six high. Through the middle of its whole length, was a passage, two feet wide, and through this passage the parties were to go. The wood was covered with oil and pitch, and sprinkled with gunpowder.

At one o'clock the Franciscans were seen advancing with great apparent humility, silently and barefoot, following their champion, Rondinelli.

Hardly has the murmur of the crowd died away, when the Dominican brothers are beheld approaching, singing as they come. Savonarola walks at their head, "his fine countenance," says one, "such as it appears in the portraits and medals still extant, not less ennobled by profound humility than by an almost seraphic devotion."

The fire was now lighted, and was burning furiously, waiting for its victims. The Franciscan, however, was not quite so ready to go in as his brother monk had been to give the challenge. He began to make objections, insisting first that Dominico should take off his robes, and next that he should not carry the wafer in with him, because that, he asserted, would be sacrilege. It is very probable that Rondinelli, with the connivance of his brethren, never intended to go in at all. If so, they had doubtless contrived how to embarrass their adversaries.

In the midst of their disputes there came a furious storm of rain and hail, with thunder, lightning, and wind, and the fire was put out.

The Franciscans now aroused the people. They spread the report that Savonarola and Dominico would not fulfill their engagement. The people became violent. They rushed to the convent, and after severe and protracted struggles on the part of the friends of Jerome, secured him, Dominico, and another monk, and threw them into prison.

CHAPTER IV.

TRIAL AND DEATH OF SAVONAROLA.

A COURIER was dispatched to the pope, who, as he did in the case of Luther, urged that the prisoners should be taken to Rome for trial. This the senate refused, but allowed them to be tried by judges sent from Rome.

Savonarola was put to a long and tedious examination, during which he maintained his intrepidity and composure, asserting as true all that he had ever said. The torture was then resorted to. One of the judges, and we record it to his honor, Francesco degli Albizi, would not remain to witness the sufferings of the martyr, but left the room, saying, "This house should not be polluted with the blood of the just."

To Jerome torture was a severe trial. Possessing a sanguine temperament, and the acute feeling which often accompanies great genius, his frame was extremely sensitive, and his nerves excitable. Besides, his constitution, never strong, was now weakened by

austerities, and by great mental conflicts. He yielded to the agonies which were inflicted on him, and confessed that he had fallen into error. The instruments ceased their work, and his confession was written out and read to him. Savonarola, the noble preacher, the fearless patriot, the humble Christian, was himself again. He declared boldly that what he had said had been extorted by the agonies he had passed through, and he maintained anew the truth of what he had asserted.

Other tortures were then applied. Among the rest, burning coals were placed at the soles of his feet, and he was threatened with still more painful punishments. Only doubtful declarations could be obtained from him, which his judges have interpreted and recorded as they chose, and when released, he reasserted what he had said before.

He was condemned at last to be burned in the month of May, 1498.

It cannot fail to be interesting to know his thoughts at this last and sad hour. The following are some of the last that we find written by him :

“Sorrow has surrounded and besieged me with a strong host, has taken possession of my heart, and ceases not day and night to contend against me. . . All that I see and hear bears the sign of sorrow. . . The thoughts of my friends disturb and trouble me, the remembrance of my brothers grieves me. . .

“Yes, thou, Lord, art my hope; the highest refuge art thou. . .

“Him, then, I will call. . . Surely he will come, and not abandon me to shame. . .

“Look, he comes already; brings joy, teaches me to contend, and says: ‘Cease not to call; speak with confidence, and from a full heart.’ On thee, O Lord,

have I trusted. . . I shall not be given over to eternal shame. . .

“O wonderful power of hope! before which all sorrow yields, all ready consolation comes. Let, now, sorrow be loud with all its host; . . let the world press; . . let enemies arise; . . I fear nothing. On thee, O Lord, have I trusted. . . Thou art my hope. . . My refuge art thou.”

“For the sake of thy name thou wilt guide and lead me.”

His journal here was broken off because writing materials were taken away from him.

While the bishop disrobed him, Savonarola was silent and abstracted. His thoughts appeared far away from the scene which was enacting before him, until the bishop came to the words, “I separate thee from the Church triumphant.” His attention was caught, and he spoke out: “From the militant, but not from the triumphant; that thou canst not do.”

With Dominico and another monk he ascended the scaffold, and the three died in the flames.

We have thought it best to refer at some length to Savonarola, both on account of his piety and eloquence, as well as on account of the great influence which his writings must have exerted after his death. As many as three hundred of his sermons have survived him, besides many other works, printed and distributed throughout Italy, all filled with a holy unction, and inculcating devotion to God.

It is true that there were errors in his preaching; but how could it be otherwise, when we consider that he never came out fully like Luther from the Roman Catholic Church, and never shook himself off from the dominion of the pope?

CHAPTER V.

THE BOY DISPUTANT — THE BIBLE TRANSLATED
INTO ITALIAN.

WE will now look at the condition of Italy as it was some years after the death of Savonarola, when the writings of Luther were spreading beyond Germany.

In every city, in every hamlet, the writings of the Reformers were beginning to penetrate. Frequently not under the names of their true authors, for the Italian monks had so vilified them that the simple people were afraid of their very name. But they were translated and circulated as Gospel treatises. Even the portraits of the German preachers found their way into Italy, where they were received sometimes as pictures of the saints.

The priests said that Luther was an atheist; that he denied the immortality of the soul; that he was even born of an incubus, wholly carnal, and composed of grease and fat. The other Reformers were complimented with like flattering appellations.*

* From a French writer we translate the following extracts of an article on the German Reformers, as a specimen of how they wrote and talked:

“There are men who appear in the world with the terrible mission of trampling on, of chastising humanity. They pass like dark meteors among the people. Around them flow blood and tears. Behind them remain only ruins, and the dark silence of death and desolation. These scourges of the earth, which history contemplates only with a kind of terror, even across the dust of the sepulcher, are not the most cruel, nor the most dreadful enemies of humanity.”

“God, exhausted in patience by the crimes of the earth, raises up to a corrupted people one of those men who sow, with bad doctrines, subversive principles, ruin and death, in the field of the heart and the intellect.”

“There is not, perhaps, in history a name more guilty than that of Martin Luther, the patriarch of Protestantism.”

The Italians, however, knew from experience that some allowance was to be made for the prejudices of their priests; and when the German soldiers of Charles of Bourbon, who sacked Rome in the year 1527, told them that Luther, Melancthon, and their followers were truly pious men, they were ready to believe, and then their writings spread more speedily than ever. Now, when the monks told some story about the Germans they were contradicted by the people. It soon came to pass that they feared not to contradict them, even when they advanced some unscriptural doctrine from the pulpit.

One day a monk was preaching at Imola. He told them that it was necessary to purchase heaven by the merit of their good works.

A boy who was present exclaimed :

“That’s blasphemy! for the Bible tells us that Christ purchased heaven by his sufferings and death, and bestows it on us freely by his mercy.”

A dispute of some length followed between the boy and the preacher. Provoked at the replies of his juvenile opponent, and at the favorable reception which the audience gave them, the monk at last cried out:

“Get you gone, you young rascal; you are but just come from the cradle, and will you take it upon you to judge of sacred things, which the most learned cannot explain.”

The boy answered :

“Did you never read these words: ‘Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God perfects praise.’”

The preacher quitted the pulpit in great anger, making threatenings against his youthful opponent, who was instantly thrown into prison, “where he

still lies," says the writer of the letter from which the account is taken.*

Thus the Gospel spread year after year through the press, and by those burning words which fell from consecrated hearts, where they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another. A new day seemed to be dawning on Italy.

In Modena, it was said, the Scriptures became the common topic of conversation. Persons of all ranks, men and women in the streets, in shops, in churches, talked of faith and of the doctrine of Christ. One of its bishops said :

" I have found things which infinitely distress me, and, while I perceive the danger, am quite at a loss as to the means by which I can extricate myself in the affairs of this flock, which with my blood I would willingly secure to Christ, and clear from public infamy. Wherever I go, and from all quarters, I hear that the city is become Lutheran."

It was so in a great measure all over the kingdom. At last the pope himself could not avoid seeing it. Pope Clement VII. spoke of it as follows :

" From the report made to us, we have learned, with grief of heart, that in different parts of Italy the pestiferous heresy of Luther prevails to a high degree, not only among secular persons, but also among ecclesiastics and the regular clergy, both mendicant and non-mendicant ; so that some, by their discourses and conversation, and what is worse, by their public preaching, infect numbers with this disease, greatly scandalize faithful Christians who lie under the obedience of the Roman Church and observe its laws, and contribute to the increase of heresies, the stum-

* M'Crie's Ref. Italy, p.101. Schelhorni Amænit. Hist. Eccl., tom. ii., p. 54.

bling of the weak, and the no small injury of the Catholic faith.”*

Was Italy, then, about to turn Protestant under the very nose of the pope?

One cause of the fast spreading light, besides the preaching of the Gospel and the conversation of the people, was the translation of the Bible; and this was not confined to one man or to one translation. At least three translations were made about this time: one by Teofilo, one by Marmochini, and one by Brucioli. The latter was entitled “*La Bibbia tradotta in Lingua Toscano.*” The first edition appeared in the year 1532, and was dedicated to Francis I., king of France. The good Italian expected that Francis would take some favorable notice of it; but he forgot, or had not yet heard, that Francis was busily engaged in extirpating heresy in France. He waited in vain for an answer from the king; and a Roman Catholic French writer accounts for his silence by saying that Brucioli’s Bible was very badly written and full of heresies, and that a commentary in seven volumes, which Brucioli published upon the Bible afterward, contained many more. This kind of evidence leads us to believe that the Bible and its commentary were effective and useful works.

It is a little remarkable, and looks as if the labors of Savonarola had not been in vain, that all these translations of the Bible were made by natives of Florence.

Of Antoine Brucioli it has been said that, as far as the influence of the press is concerned, he is entitled to the name of the Reformer of Italy.

* Raynaldi Annales, ad anno 1530.

CHAPTER VI.

SYMPATHY OF THE REFORMERS FOR EACH OTHER.

ABOUT the year 1530 a report was widely spread that Melancthon had been persuaded to submit to the pope. Many in Venice, hearing this report, were greatly afflicted by it.

Lucio Paoli Rosselli addressed a letter to Melancthon, urging him, as he had been the instrument of winning so many to Christ, to be firm and decided.

"In this cause," wrote the Italian, "you ought to regard neither emperor nor pope, nor any other mortal, but the immortal God only. If there be any truth in what the papists circulate about you, the worst consequences must accrue to the Gospel, and to those who have been led to embrace it, through your instrumentality and that of Luther. Be assured that all Italy waits with anxiety for the result of your assembly at Augsburg. Whatever is determined by it will be embraced by Christians in other countries, through the authority of the emperor. It behooves you, and others who are there for the purpose of defending the Gospel, to be firm, and not to suffer yourselves to be either frightened from the standard of Christ by threats, or drawn from it by entreaties and promises. I implore and obtest you, as the head and leader of the whole evangelical army, to regard the salvation of every individual. Though you should be called to suffer death for the glory of Christ, fear not, I beseech you; it is better to die with honor than to live in disgrace. You shall secure a glorious triumph from Jesus Christ if you defend his right."

eous cause; and in doing this you may depend on the aid of the prayers and supplications of many who, day and night, entreat Almighty God to prosper the cause of the Gospel, and to preserve you, and its other champions, through the blood of his Son. Farewell, and desert not the cause of Christ."

A second time Rosselli wrote to Melanchthon, urging him to courage and constancy.*

Thus from different countries the children of God watched in love over each other and the cause so dear to them.

The Italians looked for, and received, the same sympathy from their brethren which they extended to them.

Baldassare Altieri, in the name of the brethren of the Church of Venice, Vicenza, and Treviso wrote to Luther, about the year 1542, that they felt ashamed, and were unable to account for the fact that they had so long failed to acknowledge the deep obligations which they lay under to him, as the individual by whom they had been brought to a knowledge of the way of salvation; whether it was the suddenness of their emancipation had astounded their minds, or whether a certain rustic bashfulness and servile dread had deterred them from addressing so grave and holy a personage. But now necessity, and the urgency of their circumstances, had driven them to that course which ingratitude and culpable negligence had hitherto prevented them from taking. Antichrist had begun to rage against them. Some of their number had been obliged to leave the country, others were thrown into prison, and the rest were in a state of

* M'Crie's Ref. in Italy, pp. 104, 105. Venetiis 8. 3 Kal. Augusti, anno 1530. Cœlestini Act. Comit. August., tom. ii, f. 274. Cœlestini, tom. iii, f. 18. Wolfi Lect. Memorat., tom. ii, pp. 344, 345.

trepidation. As members of the same body, they looked for the sympathy and assistance of their brethren in Germany, at whose call they had come forth and espoused that cause for the sake of which they were now exposed to such imminent danger. What they begged of him was, to use his influence with the evangelical princes of Germany, to write in their behalf, requesting the Senate of Venice to abstain from that violence which the ministers of the pope urged it to employ against the poor flock of Christ, and to permit them to enjoy their own manner of worship, at least until the meeting of a general council, in the way of adopting measures to prevent all sedition and disturbance of the public peace. "If God grant," said he, "that we obtain a truce of this kind, what accessions will be made to the kingdom of Christ in point of faith and charity! How many preachers will appear to announce Christ faithfully to the people! How many prophets, who now lurk in corners, exanimated with undue fears, will come forth to expound the Scriptures. The harvest truly is great, but there are no laborers. You know what a great increase your Churches had, and what a wide door was opened for the Gospel, by the truce which, as we understand, you have enjoyed for three years. Exert yourselves to procure the same favor for us; cherish the common cause; do your endeavor, that by this means the consolation which is by Christ may be imparted to us, who daily suffer for Christ, for it is our fervent desire that the word of God may be spread abroad; but we have none to feed us, unless our want be supplied out of your abundance."

And when the Italians were driven by persecution from a country doubly dear to them by birth and by its historic associations, they found a refuge among

their brethren in Germany, in Switzerland, in England, where, for many years, they lived exiles from home and kindred, multitudes of them dying there, and others returning to die near the graves of their ancestors, too often, alas! denied the boon, by being violently dispatched wherever they were taken.

CHAPTER VII.

ADVENTURES OF CELIUS SECUNDUS CURIO.

WE cannot better lay before the reader the progress and shifting phases of the Italian Reformation than by sketches of character.

Celius Secundus Curio was one of those devoted men who labored in the cause of the Reformation in Italy.

He was born in Piedmont in the year 1503. At nine years of age he was left an orphan, but being of a noble family, he received a liberal education at the University of Turin, his native city. His father had bequeathed to him a Bible beautifully written, which Curio read carefully, and before he was twenty years of age became so enlightened by its study that he embraced the doctrines of the Reformers. His next step was to read their writings, and his mind was then filled with the desire to go to Germany. He set out, and on his journey, not fearing to advocate the doctrines which he believed in, he was seized by the spies of the bishop of Ivree and thrown into prison.

After several months he was released through the

intercession of his friends. The bishop, pleased with his manners and valuing his talents, thought he could draw him back to the doctrines of the Church and attach him to himself by favors. Accordingly he placed him in the monastery of St. Benigno, where Curio, instead of being a learner, as the bishop had hoped, occupied himself in teaching the monks the doctrines of Luther.

They had a little box, which they kept sacredly on the altar of their chapel, containing the relics of the saints. One day Curio opened this box, took out the relics, and in their place put a Bible, containing an inscription, the last words of which were as follows: "In this are the true relics of the saints."

At the next solemn festival they discovered the Bible in the box, and not considering it as potent or as valuable as the relics, there was a great outcry among the good brethren of the priory of St. Benigno. Perhaps Curio thought the monks sufficiently enlightened through his teaching to be satisfied with the exchange; but he found the storm was becoming too violent, and suspicion gathering round his head, he concluded to give up his residence for the present among them, and accordingly fled to Milan.

Several years passed, during which he traveled through different parts of Italy, making a living by teaching. In Milan he gained a great reputation for learning, and there married. Removing to a village in the territories of the Duke of Savoy, he continued his occupation.

One day, with some of his friends, he went to hear a Dominican monk preach, who, as usual, drew a frightful picture of the German Reformers, and in proof of what he said pretended to quote from a work of Luther. After the sermon was over Curio

went up to the pulpit and invited the friar to look at his quotations again. He produced the book which had been referred to, and read the passages in the presence of a good part of the audience. They turned out to be entirely different from what the friar had asserted, and the people, indignant at his deceit and audacity, drove the preacher out of the village. A complaint was made before an inquisitor against Curio, who was arrested and carried a prisoner to Turin, where his exchange of the relics of St. Benigno for the Bible was brought forward as strong evidence of heretical guilt. Knowing that his friends possessed great influence, every precaution was taken to prevent his escape or rescue, and he was therefore placed in an inner room of the prison, and, like Paul and Silas, his feet made fast in the stocks. It was not long before they became so swollen by confinement that he begged the jailer to release his right foot for a day or two. During that time he availed himself of some rags which were within his reach, and a reed, to make an artificial leg, upon which he placed his shoe, and when the jailer appeared he put his real limb as far as possible out of sight, and begged that he might be allowed to ease his left foot instead of the right.

The keeper of the prison granted him this favor on seeing that the right leg was secured, as he supposed, and thus Curio had both feet at liberty. During the following night he attempted to make his escape. Forcing the door of the room in which he was confined, he felt his way through the dark passages, dropped from a window, and finally scaled the walls of the prison, and fled. Before he went, however, he took his false leg from the stocks and pulled it to pieces, and his persecutors, being greatly puzzled

to account for his escape, circulated the report that he had effected it by magic.*

The labors of Curio, as he thus traveled from place to place, were the means of leading many to see the corruptions of the Roman Catholic Church, especially at Milan.

At Pavia his enemies made an effort to secure him again, but the people and the scholars of the place prevented them. At last, tired out by such pursuits, he decided to leave Italy forever. He came to Pessa and waited there until his family should join him. The officers of the Inquisition were on his track, and while he was at dinner the captain of the band entered the room, and commanded him, in the pope's name, to yield himself up a prisoner. Curio despairing of escape rose to do so, but unconsciously retained the knife in his hand with which he had been carving his food. It is said that the wicked flee when no one pursueth, and so it was with the Italian barisello. Seeing an athletic figure approaching him with a large knife in his hand, he was seized with sudden fear, and retreated to a corner of the room, on which Curio, with great presence of mind, walked deliberately out and through the armed men, to where his horse was tied, which he mounted, and the next moment galloped away from them.

His family shortly after followed him, and when he was sixty-six years of age death put an end to his trials.

Curio wrote much, and wrote well, in Latin, Italian, and French. His writings have been read extensively in Italy, and it may be their work is not yet done.

* M'Crie's Ref. in Italy, pp. 113, 114; also, Celii Secundi Curonis Pasquillus Ecstaticus una cum aliis aliquot sanctis pariter et lepidissimis Dialogis. Schelhorn Amenitates Hist. Eccles et Hist., vol. ii, pp. 759, 770.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEVOTED WOMEN OF ITALY.

THE faithful and successful laborers in the work of God are not of one sex only. In all ages devoted women have appeared, who have nobly done their part in winning souls to Christ.

Julia de Gonzago, or Julie de Gonzague, as it is written by French historians, from whom we derive mostly the incidents which we narrate, is numbered among these. She was one of the most beautiful women of her age, and not more distinguished for her beauty than for her talents. At an early age she married Vespasiano Colonna, duke of Trajetto, already an old and infirm man. In the year 1528 she became a widow, and though yet young, her love to her former husband was so great that nothing could induce her to marry again. The princes of Italy sought her hand in vain. *Non maritura* she had adopted as her motto, to show that her first attachment should never die.

There was probably a reason for this which none of her historians have recorded. We are not told when she gave her heart to Christ; indeed, all that the Roman Catholic writers tell us in reference to this subject is, as we must expect, unsatisfactory and prejudiced; but when we consider her talents, her learning, and her unspotted character, we think we have reason to believe that, like the devoted Mrs. Fletcher, she gave herself so fully to the cause of Christ as to leave little room for earthly attachments. Her good deeds and her rare personal attractions were celebrated in the songs

of the poets of her day, and we doubt not that her life after her husband's death was spent, with her fortune, in spreading the Gospel among her Italian countrymen.

In the year 1534 the fame of her beauty had reached Solymen II., the Turkish sovereign. He sent Barbarossa, his admiral, to carry her off, and bring her forcibly to his dominions. The admiral arrived in the night at her residence, took the place by assault, and failed by a single moment of his prey. Julia, hearing the noise, fled to the mountains, and remained there until she could safely return.

Isabella Manricha, at Besegna, lived and embraced the Reformed doctrine at Naples. With great zeal she labored in the cause of Christ. Nothing could abate her ardor in spreading to others a knowledge of the peace which she had found. Persecutions and trials speedily surrounded her on all sides. Being of a noble family, her friends thought it a disgrace that their blood should be tainted by heresy, and she was at last obliged to renounce her home, her rank, her fortune, and her country, and live an exile in poverty and solitude.

Renée, the duchess of Ferrara, daughter of Louis XII., king of France, was born in the year 1510. Notwithstanding her high rank and great accomplishments, she became interested in the questions which were so deeply agitating the whole of Christendom. Who can describe the many hours which she spent in earnest prayer? Who can tell the mental struggles which it cost to lay her titles, her wealth, even her reputation, and at last her children, on the altar of Christ. But she did so. She gave up all for him. And when she beheld her suffering brethren exposed to all those trials which the malice of the Italian priests contrived against them, she could not conceal her sympathy for them. And then she was

marked as their confederate. But this did not prevent her from protecting and saving many who fled to her palace for safety. Driven from their own humble cottages by the relentless familiars of the Inquisition, men, women, and little children found an asylum with her. The gates of her castle at Ferrara the pursuers dared not pass.

High authority was at last invoked against her. The pope was appealed to, who, instead of addressing her, wrote to Hercules II., her husband. He told him that the minds of his children and servants were corrupted, and the most pernicious example held out to his subjects; that his house, which had been so long renowned for the purity of its faith, and its fealty to the holy see, was in danger of contracting the indelible stain of heresy; and that if he did not speedily abate the nuisance he would expose himself to the censures of the Church, and lose the favor of all Catholic princes.

Thereupon the duke urged Renée to avert the displeasure of his holiness by renouncing her opinions, and conforming to the ceremonies of Romanism. The duchess had gone too far thus to sacrifice her conscience, and as well as we can judge from the accounts which have come down to us, her husband was unwilling to proceed to extremities.

The pope then addressed himself to Henry II., king of France, her nephew. Henry sent Ortiz, an inquisitor, to the court of Ferrara. His instructions were "that he was to acquaint himself accurately with the extent to which the mind of the duchess was infected with error; he was then to request a personal interview with her, at which he should inform her of the great grief which his most Christian majesty felt at hearing that 'his only aunt,' whom he had always

loved and esteemed so highly, had involved herself in the labyrinth of those detestable and condemned opinions. If, after all his remonstrances and arguments, he could not recover her by gentle means, he was next, with the concurrence of the duke, to endeavor to bring her to reason by rigor and severity: he was to preach a course of sermons on the principal points on which she had been led astray, at which she and all her family should be obliged to attend, 'whatever refusal or objection she might think proper to make.' If this proved unsuccessful in reclaiming her, he was next, in her presence, to entreat the duke, in his majesty's name, to 'sequester her from all society and conversation,' that she might not have it in her power to taint the minds of others; to remove her children from her, and not to allow any of the family, of whatever nation they might be, who were accused or strongly suspected of heretical sentiments, to approach her; in fine, he was to bring them to trial, and to pronounce a sentence of exemplary punishment on such as were found guilty, only leaving it to the duke to give such directions as to the mode of process and the infliction of punishment, as that the affair might terminate, as far as justice permitted, without causing scandal, or bringing any public stigma on the duchess and her dependents."*

The daughter of Louis XII. was justly indignant at such demands, and boldly and promptly refused to violate her conscience. The pope's cruel orders were carried into effect. She was confined a prisoner in her palace, was forced to listen to her husband's upbraiding, who would hear no defense from her. Her

* M'Crie's Ref. in Italy, p. 208; also *Le Laboureur, Additions and Mémoirs de Michal de Castelnau*, tom. i, p. 717.

confidential servants were proceeded against as heretics, whose sufferings eternity alone will reveal; and then, as a last resort, she was deprived of her four children, who, as if to aggravate the cruelty of the act, were taken from her, one by one, to be educated in the Roman Catholic faith.

Renée survived her husband, and came afterward to France, where she resided in the castle of Montargis, and again protected the fugitive Protestants. The Duke of Guise, her son-in-law, one day appeared with an armed force before her walls, and commanded her to dismiss the rebels whom she harbored, saying if she did not that he would batter down the walls with his cannon.

“Tell your master,” said she, “that I shall myself mount the battlements, and see if he dare kill a king’s daughter.”

She was however obliged to send away four hundred and sixty persons, to whom she had afforded refuge. She parted with them in many tears, and provided out of her own funds for the expenses of their journey. She lived until the year 1575.

Had we the space we might mention other faithful women. These are sufficient, however, as examples. That such examples were not rare may be inferred from what is said by a writer in the following century.

“In Campania, where I now write, the most learned preacher may become more learned and holy by a single conversation with some women. In my native country of Mantua, too, I found the same thing, and were it not that it would lead me into a digression, I could dilate with pleasure on the many proofs which I received, to my no small edification,

of an unction of spirit, and fervor of devotion in the sisterhood, such as I have rarely met with in the most learned men of my profession.*

CHAPTER IX.

PALEARIO.

AONIO PALEARIO, a native of Veroli, in Campagna di Roma, born about the year 1500, was one of the great writers of the sixteenth century. Uniting a wonderful eloquence of style with great force and pathos, he became distinguished among all classes. Roman Catholic writers, while condemning his religious opinions, hand his name down to us with unlimited praises of his literary abilities. Some idea may be formed of how much he contributed to the progress of the Reformation in Italy, when we state that of a work he wrote on the benefit of the death of Christ forty thousand copies were sold in six years,† and this in an age when the circulation of books was extremely small compared with what it is at present.

He had been suspected of heresy before this work came out. One day he was observed to laugh at a rich priest who was seen every morning kneeling at the shrine of a saint, but who refused to pay his debts. He was asked at another time:

“What is the first ground on which men should rest their salvation?”

He replied: “Christ.”

* Folengius, in *Psalmos*; *Apud. Gerdesii, Ital. Ref.*, p. 261.

† Shelhorn, *Ergoet Zlichkeiten*, vol. i, p. 27.

“What is the second?”

“Christ.”

“What is the third?”

“Christ.”

On this one of his adversaries asserted that if he were allowed to live there would not be a vestige of religion left in the city. Paleario was arrested and brought to trial. As a specimen of his style, we give some passages from the defense which he made:

“Is it possible to utter or conceive anything more shameful? I had said that since He in whom the divinity resided has poured out his life’s blood so lovingly for our salvation, we ought not to doubt of the good-will of heaven; but might promise ourselves the greatest tranquillity and peace. I had affirmed, agreeably to the most unquestionable monuments of antiquity, that those who turn with their souls to Christ crucified, commit themselves to him by faith, acquiesce in the promises, and cleave with assured confidence to him who cannot deceive, are delivered from all evil, and enjoy a plenary pardon of their sins. These things appeared so grievous, so detestable, so execrable to the twelve—I cannot call them men, but inhuman beasts—that they judged the author worthy of being committed to the flames. If I must undergo this punishment for the foresaid testimony, (for I deem it a testimony rather than a libel,) then, senators, nothing more happy can befall me. In such a time as this I do not think a Christian ought to die in his bed. I am not only willing to be accused, to be dragged to prison, to be scourged, to be hung up by the neck, to be sewed up in a sack, to be exposed to wild beasts—let me be roasted before a fire, provided only the truth be brought to light by such a death.”

Turning to his adversary, he said:

" You accuse me of being of the same sentiments with the Germans. What an illiberal charge! Do you mean to bind up all the Germans in one bundle? Are they all bad? . . .

" By Germans you mean Ecolampede, Erasmus, Melancthon, Luther, Pomeran, Bucer, and others who have incurred suspicion. But surely there is not a divine among us so stupid as not to perceive and confess that the writings of these men contain many things worthy of the highest praise."

The eloquent defense of Paleario triumphed over his adversaries, and he was set free.

Years afterward he was taken again at Milan, and accused of heresy. Two of the charges against him were, that he denied purgatory, and that he ascribed justification only to the merits of Christ. He was carried to Rome and thrown into the prisons of the Inquisition. "Here," says one account, "he confessed and died contrite." This, however, is not likely, for the paper containing it has neither name nor signature. The contrary appears at his trial from the statement of another Romish writer, which is as follows:

" When it appeared that this son of Belial was obstinate and refractory, and could by no means be recovered from the darkness of error to the light of truth, he was deservedly delivered to the fire, that, after suffering its momentary pains here, he might be bound in everlasting flames hereafter."*

Of the same spirit is another statement of Paleario's conduct during the trial:

" When he saw that he could produce nothing in defense of his pravity, falling into a rage he broke out in these words: 'Seeing your eminences have so

* Laderchii Annal., tom. xx, f. 204.

many credible witnesses against me, it is unnecessary for you to give yourselves or me longer trouble. I am resolved to act according to the advice of the blessed apostle, Peter, when he says, ‘Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps, who did no evil, neither was guile found in his mouth ; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.’ Proceed then to give judgment, pronounce sentence on Aonio, and thus gratify his adversaries and fulfill your office.’”

The reader can judge for himself how much these words appear like falling in a rage. He was condemned to three years’ imprisonment in the Inquisition, and then to be hung, and his body afterward burned. This was carried into execution in the seventieth year of his age, on the third day of July, 1570.

The day on which he died he wrote a letter to his children, and another to his wife. They are very short, but the more affecting on that account ; because it is probable that he had little opportunity to write, and moreover feared their being suppressed, or that his family would be harshly treated, if he said anything offensive to his judges. The letter to his wife is as follows :

“ **MY DEAREST WIFE**,—I would not wish that you should receive sorrow from my pleasure, nor ill from my good. The hour is now come when I must pass from this life to my Lord, and Father, and God. I depart as joyfully as if I were going to the nuptials of the Son of the great King, which I have always prayed my Lord to grant me, through his goodness

and infinite mercy. Wherefore, my dearest wife, comfort yourself with the will of God and with my resignation, and attend to the desponding family which still survives, training them up, and preserving them in the fear of God, and being to them both father and mother. I am now an old man of seventy years, and useless. Our children must provide for themselves by their virtue and industry, and lead an honorable life. God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with your spirit.

“Thy husband,

“AONIO PALEARIO.

“Rome, July 8, 1570.”

CHAPTER X.

ELOQUENCE OF OCHINO—HIS AFFECTING DEATH.

WELL worthy of record are many others who have maintained the truth in Italy, who have lived and labored and died for Christ.

We might tarry at the name of Peter Martyr, who wrote and published many volumes in favor of the reform. We might dwell upon the names of Peter Paul Vergerio and John Baptist Vergerio, both bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, who renounced their honors and their station for Christ's sake. The former was pope's nuncio at different times, and actually came to Germany to oppose Luther, and had an interview with him there. Again he appeared on behalf of Francis I. at the Diet of Worms; and there, it is said, showed his first leaning toward the doctrines of the Reformers.

But we turn to one whose life shows strikingly the

vicissitudes through which, in those days, the children of God were compelled to pass.

Bernardin Ochinus, or Ochino, was born at Sienna, in Tuscany, in the year 1487.

Early and anxiously he struggled for the remission of his sins in the austereities and bodily sufferings recommended by the Church of Rome. Vainly he sought this precious boon. Believing the life of a monk to be the means of obtaining it, he entered the Franciscan order of monks. Disappointed, he came back to the world and studied medicine, but was conscience-smitten for having abandoned the Franciscans. Again he went among them, and soon became distinguished for his piety and great talents. But still there was no rest to his troubled heart.

The reformed order of the Capuchins had been lately confirmed. Remarkable for their strictness of discipline and austerity of life, he determined to go among them, hoping thus to find the peace he sought. When he was forty-seven years of age he took this step, saying to himself: "Lord, if I am not saved now, I know nothing more that I can do."

Now, as he read the Bible, he was sometimes perplexed to reconcile the course he was pursuing with what the Scriptures said as to salvation being the free gift of God, through the death of Christ; but his desire to obey the Church for a while put to silence the voice of truth within his heart.

A French writer, who calls him an ambitious and apostate monk, thus describes him at this time:

"His austereities, his coarse clothing, his long beard, his pale countenance, the opinion that was entertained of his holiness, caused him to be regarded as an extraordinary man. The greatest nobles, even sovereign princes, filled with a deep respect for his

person, went in advance of him, and disputed with each other for the honor of entertaining him, and loaded him with distinguished marks of affection and confidence. Though of a feeble frame, and somewhat advanced in years, all his journeys were made on foot, and the most rigid self-denial practiced in his food ; even in the palaces of the great, who eagerly hastened to receive him, and to offer him all the luxuries of their luxurious life, he slept upon the hard floor. His goodness was spoken of all over Italy."

Thus this poor self-denying monk was seeking to know the way of salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

So highly was he esteemed, that in the year 1538 he was elected in Florence vicar general of the order of the Capuchins. In 1541 he was elected again to the same post in a chapter which was held at Naples. With Paul III., the pope, he became a favorite, who appointed him his father confessor and chaplain. It was a singular position for him, the pope's confessor and chaplain, and yet on the point of turning Protestant.

At last light dawned upon his heart. By searching the Scriptures he became convinced that the death of Christ was the only ground of salvation, and as he looked to Jesus the load of sin was gone, and God was reconciled. The writers who relate to us the events of his life, tell of his great eloquence about this time, but do not speak of its resulting from any immediate cause. In the book of God we read, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord ;" and we think we ought to ascribe his great power over the people now to the Spirit of God, though he yet remained for some time a Roman Catholic. The author we have quoted thus describes his eloquence.

"The people assembled in crowds to hear him preach. There was no church large enough to contain the multitude of his hearers."

Cardinal Bembo, so celebrated himself for his talents, describes Ochino. He had sent to the Marchioness of Pescara, begging her to influence Ochino to visit Venice. He went accordingly, and Bembo writes to the marchioness, in a letter dated February 23, 1539 :

"Assuredly, I never heard so edifying and holy a preacher, and do not wonder that your highness esteems him as you do. He discourses very differently from any other that has mounted the pulpit in my day, and in a more Christian manner ; bringing forth truths of superior excellence and usefulness, and enforcing them with the most affectionate ardor. He pleases everybody above measure, and will carry the hearts of all with him when he leaves this place. From the whole city I send your highness immortal thanks for the honor you have done us."

In another letter he says :

"I talk with your highness as I talked this morning with the reverend father Frate Bernardino, to whom I have laid open my whole heart and soul, as I would have done to Jesus Christ, to whom I am persuaded he is acceptable and dear. Never have I had the pleasure to speak to a holier man than he."

On the 14th of April he writes again :

"Our Frate Bernardino, whom I desire henceforth to call mine as well as yours, is at present adored in this city. There is not a man or woman who does not extol him to the skies ! O what pleasure ! O what delight ! O what joy has he given !"

The Emperor Charles V., who attended his preaching in Italy, said of him :

“That man would make the stones weep.”

It was not long, however, before the priests discovered heresy in this wonderful eloquence. Indeed, he was preaching the true doctrines of Protestantism, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. As they watched him closely they found little of the virgin in his sermons, but much of Christ; little of the saints and tradition, but much of the Scriptures; little of purgatory, but much of heaven.

They denounced him to the pope, who summoned him to Rome, and he proceeded humbly to obey the summons, and would probably have soon died for Christ, like Paleario, had he not been arrested by an unforeseen circumstance. While on his way he came to Florence, and there met with Peter Martyr, who advised him not to put himself in the pope's power, and he accordingly fled to Geneva in the year 1542.

What a change to the devoted monk! Only the year before elected vicar general of his order; only a few weeks before in the full tide of his wonderful eloquence; and now a fugitive from his country and from his friends. How truly he must have felt that he had given up all for Christ.

The pope was so enraged when he heard that Ochino had turned Protestant, that he seemed about to suppress the whole order of the Capuchins, and was only pacified on receiving the most satisfactory assurances that they had not adopted the creed of their vicar general.

Bernardino afterward came to England, where he resided until bloody Queen Mary came to the throne. Being then obliged to leave, he came to Basil, then became pastor of an Italian Church at Zurich, where he remained until he was seventy-six years of age.

He was at this time accused of doctrines contrary to the received opinions of the Reformers, and was obliged to leave Zurich. He sought an asylum in Basil, but the magistrates commanded him to leave immediately. The poor old man, with two sons and a daughter of his old age, wandered forth in the depth of winter seeking a home. He went from place to place until he came to Poland, where he begged that he might be allowed to stay. The papal nuncio, Commenden, ordered him to leave. He prepared to go. Some gentlemen, pitying him on account of his age and infirmities, urged him to stay; but he meekly replied that men must obey the magistrates, and that he would do so, even were he to die among the wolves in the wood. This was the man who had charmed a whole nation by his eloquence, and for whom kings and princes had vied with each other to receive him as their guest. He left Poland, with his children, hoping to find a last resting-place in Moravia. The journey was persevered in through great want, exposure, and cold. It was too much for their strength. They were all taken with the plague on the way, and his children, one after another, died by his side. He, himself, partly recovered, and alone went still on. Was there no home for him? Yes, he had almost found it. Three weeks after the death of his children he died, in Slawkaw, at the age of seventy-seven.

the apostles, when soon after the death of Jesus they were brought before the council and beaten, who departed rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for him. It was not the spirit of Paul and Silas, who, when beaten and bruised, and their feet in the stocks, sang at midnight praises to God until the prisoners heard them, until the angels heard, and one of them came and loosed their fetters and set them free. It was not the spirit of Peter, after he had received that wonderful baptism at Pentecost; who when brought before the priests forgot his personal danger, and boldly charged them with the crucifixion of his Saviour. It was not the spirit of the early disciples, who when possessors of lands or houses freely sold them and laid the money at the apostles' feet.

The Italians suffered nobly, bravely, patiently, gloriously; but too often they waited for their enemies to find them before they confessed Christ, instead of finding out their enemies and at all hazards preaching the Gospel to them. The Christian's warfare is always an offensive warfare. To stand simply on the defensive, is to wait for Satan to surround him by his infernal host. He must be winning souls to Christ; he must be seeking to save them from their bondage. For this he must meet mockery and insult, contempt and scorn, blows and death, if necessary, and still press on, work on, and God will fill his heart with joy. If he will not do this, Satan will drive him to the wall, strip him of his zeal and love, and, like Samson, he will find his strength gone.

Italy needed men like Paul, like Knox, like Luther.

Another cause which prevented the further progress of the Italian Reformation was the nearness, the almost omnipresence of the priesthood. For some

time the priests did not take the alarm, but when they did they left no means untried to extirpate the so-called heresy. "A horde of commissioned spies were dispersed over Italy, who, by means of the recommendations with which they were furnished, got admission into private families, insinuated themselves into the confidence of individuals, and conveyed the secret information which they obtained in this way to the inquisitors. Assuming a variety of characters, they haunted the company of the learned and illiterate, and were to be found equally in courts and cloisters."* Like birds of prey, they seized those who were suspected of heresy, and either drove them from the country or consigned them to imprisonment or death.

The Inquisition appointed, and foreign priests who had no sympathy with the people having become the judges, little ceremony was observed in the trial or execution of the unfortunate heretics. It was a received maxim that it was for the good of the Church, for the good of the country, for the good of all Roman Catholics yet remaining orthodox, that heretical pravity should be uprooted in the kingdom. The priests believed that the Bible-readers were noxious weeds, which spread their pernicious vapors to all around them, and that in charity they must be destroyed. Hence no ingenuity was spared to find them out, and little mercy was extended to them when discovered. Many of the preceding pages show what sufferings followed the proceedings of the Inquisition. It is right that Christians should know what their brethren suffered in former ages, that we may be daily prepared to suffer the same now; and if not

* M'Crie's Ref. in Italy, p. 204. Calcagno Opera, p. 169. Olympia Morata Opera, p. 102.

called actually to suffer them, be thankful to God that we are spared, and thankful that we have an inward consciousness that we possess the same courage. It is right, moreover, that Christians should know and carefully remember these things, because the so-called Church which inflicted them still exists, her doctrines the same, her organization the same, her priesthood the same. She indeed boasts of her infallibility. She thinks, then, she has done no wrong in pouring out like rivers the blood of the martyrs, if this boast be founded in truth. She has only been clearing the world of pestilential errorists, whose presence and existence were a plague to the community. But not of individual members of the Church of Rome do we thus speak. Many of them would blush to suppose that their Church could ever, in these days, in this country, imprison, banish, or execute a man for the sake of his opinions. Many of them, kind and benevolent in their social relations, have little idea of what their Church has done, or can do had she the power. We speak of those who rule the Church, her cardinals, bishops, and priests, to whose mandate every member, whether far removed among the ice-bound regions of the north, or in the farthest spot which man has reached to the south, is bound to submit. Recent events in Italy, especially in Venice, have shown that her spirit is still the same. It only slumbers, to awake with renewed energy as soon as she can grasp the power.

And this Church, firmly planted, is among us. She is here, in a most perfect organization, by which one chief moves and regulates the whole, giving power and promptness to her actions. And when she chooses to attack, either secretly or openly, either separately or together, either by stratagem or force, the principles on

which this government is founded, our telegraphs, with lightning wings, are potent auxiliaries by which the order given in Rome may fly to the most remote confessional box of our country. She is here, in her monasteries and nunneries, rapidly increasing, the very institutions which, three hundred years ago, were suppressed in England as enemies to the liberties of the state. She is here, in her Jesuits, spread like locusts, in every section of the country; an order of men which have been proscribed in the countries of Europe because of their dangerous intrigues against the state. She is here, in her priests and bishops, greatly augmenting in numbers year after year. She is here, in her immense churches and cathedrals, where her teachers, who are men among us but not of us, indoctrinate her people.

Do we fear the effect of all this? Not if Christians will faithfully do the work which this state of things suggests. Three hundred years ago, in Ireland, men fought for their religion. It was hand against hand, and steel against steel. Three hundred years ago in Scotland, men prayed, men preached, men covenant-ed, men distributed the Bible for their religion, and what was the result? Scotland became thoroughly Protestant, and Ireland never gave up the superstitions of Rome. To the work of the Scotch Reformers God's providence calls every Christian in Amer-ica. Not only do our eternal interests depend on faithfulness in this respect, but our institutions and our religious liberty. Nay, the time may come when our lives and the lives of our children will be the forfeit. As we have said in speaking of the Italian Christians, the warfare must be an offensive warfare. **The Bible must be carried to every home. The chil-**

dren must be sought by faithful men and women, who will teach them Christ. Colporteurs must be multiplied everywhere. But how is this work done now? One or two examples are sufficient. Nearly the whole of the lower part of the city of New York, where there are thousands and thousands of men and women who have souls, has been left for Satan to run riot in. It is at present one of his grand missionary fields. It is true that spacious and elegant churches have been built up town, but even these are not intended for the mass of the people. There is no place in them usually for the middle and lower classes. What then is to become of the people in the great center of commerce and religion? And are we fulfilling the trust which God has placed in our hands? We bid the children of an apostate Church welcome to our shores. We rejoice in being able to share with them the bounties of our harvest fields, but what God requires of us is, that we should bring the Gospel to their hearts. And this must be done by greatly increased efforts among the Christians of America.

We cannot forbear another example; it refers to the country. Scattered throughout our villages are thousands of Roman Catholic families, who are accessible to the kind words of those who love the Saviour. But it is a fact that they are seldom visited by their neighbors to speak to them of Christ. If a minister or colporteur perchance proposes to call on them the reply is too ready: "O he is a Roman Catholic!" Shame, shame on such an answer! That he is a Roman Catholic is a strong reason why he should be visited. Enthralled by the priest, we should endeavor to set him free. Thrown upon our shores in spiritual destitution, we should clothe and feed him. If we do

not thus overcome the errors of Rome, we may rest assured she will overcome us. Placed in our hands, we have become our brother's keeper, and God will require his blood. No other nation in all the world's history has been situated as we are. No such circumstances have ever called for such active zeal, enlarged benevolence, and individual activity. O for a voice to reach and thrill through every Christian heart! a voice which will wake up its slumbering energies, and rouse to active effort in the cause of Christ!

When the trumpet sounds to arms, the soldier, ready for battle, rushes to his standard; when the beacon-fire, far off, is beheld blazing on the mountain top, the clansman flies to the appointed post; and now, when the indications of a divine providence, as certain as ever was trumpet blast or beacon-fire, call to increased action, let every Christian, armed and equipped for war, be in his place.

THE END.







